288 / 31 Hall

POLITICAL PAPERS,

COMPRISING THE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

SEVERAL DISTINGUISHED PERSONS

IN THE YEARS 1792, 1793, &c.

WITH THE

EDITOR,

THE

Rev. CHRISTOPHER WYVILL,

CHAIRMAN OF THE LATE COMMITTEE OF ASSOCIATION OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.

VOLUME VI.

YORK:

PRINTED BY L. LUND, LITTLE-STONEGATE:

SOLD BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD; J. DEBRETT, PICCADILLY; AND J. MAWMAN, IN THE POULTRY, LONDON; AND J. TODD, YORK.

POLITICAL PAPERS,



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OF THE

SIXTH VOLUME.

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5. Address to the Printer of the Leeds Intelligencer, by the Rev. William Wood.

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NUMBER XXII.

Containing the Editor's correspondence with several Yorkshire gentlemen, in 1801, with a view to promote a meeting of the county, after the measure of a previous meeting to be called by William Wrightson, esq. had been laid aside, with a letter on this subject from the editor, to Thomas Bigge, esq.

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PRELIMINARY PAPERS.

Paper I.

Requisition to the High Sheriff of the County of York, adopted by a Meeting of Gentlemen on the 7th of February, 1798.

To the High Sheriff of the County of York.

Sir,

WE, the undersigned Freeholders of the County of York, request you to call a Meeting of the Freeholders at the Castle of York, to consider, in the present perilous situation of public affairs, what properly may be done, what legally can be done by them for the salvation of the Country. In order that the sense of the Country on this important subject may be taken with all possible fairness, we trust you will have the goodness to fix a Meeting on some day sufficiently distant to admit due Notice to be completely given.

Northumberland
Thanet
William Wrightson, Cusworth
Thomas Gascoigne, Parlington
G. Strickland, Boynton
C. Turner, Kirkleatham
Henry Peirse, Bedale
Walter Fawkes, Farnley
George Cayley, Brompton
Christopher Wilson, Elmhall
C. Wyvill, Burton Hall
Francis Wrangham, Hunmanby
Robert Sinclair, York
S. W. Hoel, York
W. Milner, Nun Appleton
Fowler Hicks, Richmond
Jerom Dring, York
J. W. Clough, Norton Conyers
Thomas Wycliffe, Richmond
John Robinson, Richmond
Henry Hegborough, Richmond
George Merryweather, Yarm
Francis Blackburne, Brignal
Simon Thomas Scroope, Danby
George Wroughton, Adwick
F. M. Trappe, St. Trinnian's
Mam. Dodsworth, Cattle Hall
Conyers Norton, Sawley Hall
Edward Meynell, Yarm
John Watson, Hagthorpe
George Ion, Bubwith
Thomas Green, Bentley
Samuel F. Barlow, Middlethorpe
William Swiney, Naburn
Robert Richardson, Doncaster
Thomas Meynell, Yarm
Richard Sykes, Foxholes
Francis Cholmeley, Brandsby
William Ward, Acomb
William Hudson, Guildersome
Simon Tyas, York
J. Bell, Thirsk
Samuel Crompton, Wood End
Jonathan Walker, Ferham
Samuel Shore, Jun. Fulwood
Matthew Cocking, York
Isaac Brownley, Brantingham
Thomas Dorrington, Wyton

Jo. Walker, Rotherham	N. Pigot, York
James Lee, Carlton	Francis Fowker, Banke Hall
John Minithorpe, Burton	Tho. Arthington, Arthington
Edw. Topham, Wold Cottage	Matthew Raine, Hartforth
William Lee, Grove	A. Hammond, Hutton Bonville
John Simpson, Malton	W. Strickland, Boynton
Thomas Lumley, Dalby	N. W. Bayley, North-Allerton
Thomas Rawson, Wardsend	John Hale, the Plantation
John Cook, Doncaster	Luke Yarker, Fingall
Brian W. D. Cooke, Alverley	Leonard Allen, Gaile
George Townend, York	Ralph Milbanke, Halnaby
John Hutton, Marske	John York, Richmond
Thomas Wilson, Fulford	Hugh Parker, Woodthorpe
R. S. Milnes, Fryston	William Marshall, Brompton
John Lee, Bailey	G. Egremont, Howden
Samuel Shore, Broadfield	J. Egremont, Howden
George Baker, Ellimore	Greg. Elsley, Patrick Brompton
Charles Spearman, Beaston	Henry Ibbotson, Denton
William Bosville, Gunthwaite	Lionel Copley, Sprot Borough
Richard Heaton, Panithorpe	E. Baldwyn, Bradford
John Sykes, Hull	John Naylor, Well Burton
John Raper, Aberford	John Wood, Bolton
Chas. G. Fairfax, Gilling Castle	Francis Hawksworth, Guiseley

Paper II.

To the High-Sheriff of the County of Kent.

Sir,

YOU are hereby requested by the persons whose names are underſigned as ſoon as poſſible to ſummon a Meeting at Maidſtone of the Nobility, Clergy, Gentlemen, Yeomen, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County of Kent, to take into their conſideration the propriety of addreſſing his Majeſty, immediately to avail himſelf of the propoſals for a Peace now (by authority declared to have been) made from the Governing Powers of France.

Thereby to put a ſtop to the rapid and alarming increaſe of the Publick Debt, and the almoſt over-whelming taxes of this Nation, to the conſequent immenſe riſe in the price of all the neceſſaries of life, the declining fortunes of the Gentry, the heavy burthens on the farmer, the ſevere diſtreſſes of the Poor; but, above all, and more eſpecially to prevent the further effuſion of human blood, and the deſtruction of mankind, now extended over and into every quarter of the Globe; and to the wanton cruelties and incalculable evils naturally attendant on ſuch a ſtate of things, which no mind, tinctured with the leaſt drop of humanity, can contemplate without a moſt ſincere wiſh, a moſt ardent deſire to put an end at length to miſchiefs and miſeries ſo complicated and extenſive.

To

To address his Majesty to negociate a solid Peace on honourable and equitable terms; thereby to secure the welfare, commerce and stability of these Realms; and by such means, in some measure to alleviate the calamities even of our enemies themselves, (remembering that though they are such at present, they are still our fellow-creatures) and thereby acquire and deserve the most glorious of all *Titles*, that of the Preserver and Friend of the *Human Race*.

HOLMSDALE, *January* 8*th*, 1800.

Paper III.

LEEDS.

At a very numerous and respectable Meeting of Merchants Manufacturers, and Mill-Owners, held this Day, at the Mixed Cloth-Hall, in pursuance of Public Advertisement, from the Trustees of the Mixed and White Cloth-Hall, to take into Consideration the Propriety of petitioning the King for the purpose of obtaining a speedy Peace,

(Mr. JOSEPH LINSLEY in the Chair)

It was unanimously resolved,

1. THAT great numbers of laborious and industrious families, who have hitherto supported themselves by the Manufacturers of this Neighbourhood, are now reduced to the greatest distress.

Resolved unanimously.

2. That many of the more wealthy Manufacturers, wanting a sale for their goods, have been under the necessity of dismissing a great proportion of their workmen, who, in consequence thereof, have been obliged to apply for parochial relief, thereby adding to the numbers already dependent upon the parishes for their subsistence, which has advanced our Poor Rates beyond all example.

Resolved unanimously.

3. That our Taxes have advanced in as great or a greater proportion.

Resolved unanimously.

4. That in addition to these evils, every kind of provisions, and particularly corn, has risen to a most exorbitant price.

Considering that want of employment to the present extent, the excessive demands upon us for poor rates, the enormous taxes, and the high price of provisions, were unknown to this Country before the unfortunate War in which we are engaged.

Resolved unanimously.

5. That the War is the principal cause of these complicated evils; that if it be continued, the absolute ruin of very great numbers of us is inevitable; and that it is a duty we owe to our Country, our Families, and our Posterity, to petition the King to adopt such measures as his Majesty in his wisdom may see fit for the purpose of obtaining a speedy Peace.

Reſolved unanimouſly,

6. That a Committee of thirteen Gentlemen be appointed, with power to add to their number, to carry the foregoing Reſolutions into effect.

Reſolved.

7. That William Wilberforce, Eſq; and the Hon. Henry Laſcelles, our County Members, be requeſted to preſent the Petition to the King.

Reſolved unanimouſly,

8. That the Proceedings of this Meeting be publiſhed in the Leeds and ſuch Provincial and London Papers as the Committee may judge proper.

Reſolved unanimouſly,

9. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Truſtees of the Mixed and White Cloth Halls, for calling us together upon this important occaſion.

Reſolved, unanimouſly,

10. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. Joſeph Linſley, for his impartial conduct in the Chair.

JOSEPH LINSLEY, Chairman.

LEEDS, *January 13th*, 1801.

Paper IV.

Explanation publiſhed in the Leeds Intelligencer by order of the Committee appointed to promote the Petition for Peace in 1801.

THE Committee appointed at the Meeting of the Merchants, Manufacturers, and Mill-Owners to conduct the buſineſs relative to a Petition for Peace, have been in doubt whether it were better to anſwer a thing ſo made up of groundleſs aſſertion, of baſe inſinuation, and virulent abuſe, as the letter which appeared in the laſt Intelligencer, under the ſignature of a Freeholder, or paſs it over in ſilent contempt. If the Committee were certain, that it would be read only by the perſons to whom it is addreſſed, "the reſpectable Freeholders of the County of York," they would certainly have felt no doubt of this kind, and would have left the letter to decide its own fate; but as it manifeſtly appears to be the deſign of the Writer to inflame the weak rather than to enlighten the reflecting and truly reſpectable mind, they think it their duty to ſtate the following facts.

The Meeting was determined upon and called by the Truſtees of the two Halls, without any influence whatever but that ariſing from a full knowledge of the diſtreſſed ſituation of the Body of the People, for whom they hold the office of Truſtees.

The Writer aſſerts that "a deficiency in our own home conſumption of wearing apparel is the principal cauſe of the check in trade

under

under which we labour." Is it poſſible that the Freeholder can be ignorant that the home conſumption of the Manufactures of this Town and neighbourhood will not bear a compariſon with the export trade? His ignorance on this ſubject may, perhaps, be ſome excuſe for what he ſays about diſhoneſty and profligacy. If he be a man of knowledge and information, the diſhoneſty and profligacy belong to himſelf.

The Writer further aſſerts that "the Chairman was of no greater conſequence than the Clerk at a Diſſenting Meeting Houſe," and again "that the Chairman at the concluſion of the Meeting was not the ſame perſon as was placed in that ſituation at the commencement of it." The Committee declare that the Chairman of the Meeting was the ſame from the beginning to the end of the buſineſs, that he is neither a Clerk nor a Diſſenter, and that he was ſelected for the ſituation by the other Truſtees previous to the opening of the Meeting.

There are other dark hints in the Freeholder's letter which the Committee cannot anſwer, becauſe they cannot underſtand them. The abuſe levelled at a particular Religious Body they leave to the animadverſion of that Body, if it be thought worthy of their notice.

The Committee did not wiſh to have noticed an anonymous publication, and applied to the Printer for the name of the author; but this having been refuſed them, they cannot allow the cauſe in which they are embarked to ſuffer in any degree by uncontradicted falſehoods.

By Order of the Committee

JOSEPH LINSLEY, Chairman.

Paper V.

To the Printer of the Leeds Intelligencer.

Sir,

A Correſpondent in your laſt Paper, avowedly averſe to the immediate reſtoration of Peace, to effect his purpoſe has endeavoured to re-kindle the flame of religious diſſention. With this view he has not ſcrupled to aſſert that the late Meeting at the Committee-Room of the mixed Cloth-Hall originated with the Diſſenters, and that their real object is not to put a ſtop to the calamities of War, but to get a certain ſet of perſons into power who will aſſiſt them in procuring a repeal of the Teſt Act, that they may overturn the Hierarchy, and with it the Civil Conſtitution of this Kingdom. Your impartiality will, I doubt not, give me an opportunity of aſſuring the Public, that the whole is a malignant falſehood. The Diſſenters have no intention to renew their application to Parliament for the repeal of the Teſt-Act; if ſuch an attempt ſhould ever be made again, it will be in times very different from the preſent, when there ſhall be no reaſon to apprehend that evil-minded men may take advantage of it, to diſturb

turb the Public Peace. The Diſſenters had not in 1790, nor have they now, any views hoſtile to the Hierarchy of the Church of England. Though they cannot in all points receive the doctrines, or conform to the rites of the eſtabliſhment, they wiſh to live on terms of more than good neighbourhood, of Chriſtian benevolence and charity with all its conſcientious Members. So far I have been reluctantly drawn from more pleaſing employments, to repel the virulent attack of an anonymous defamer. I felt it a duty to the Public, as well as to myſelf and to my immediate connections. With the reſt of his letter I have no concern. I deem it in all its parts below contempt. I am, &c.

WILLIAM WOOD.

PARK-ROW, LEEDS, *Jan. 29th*, 1801.

Paper VI.

BRADFORD, *January 29th*, 1801.

At a very numerous and reſpectable Meeting of the Merchants, Wool-Staplers, Mill-Owners, Manufacturers, and others connected with the Woollen Manufactures of the Town and Neighbourhood of Bradford, in Yorkſhire, held this Day at the Piece-Hall, purſuant to Public Advertiſement,

(Mr. BENJAMIN KAYE, in the Chair)

It was reſolved,

1. FROM the alarming and unprecedented decay of the trade of this town and neighbourhood; from the great and rapid increaſe of our poor rates and of our taxes, from the lamentable circumſtance of great numbers of the work people, who were lately engaged in our various branches of Manufacture, being now totally deſtitute of employment; and from the high price of every ſort of grain, and of other neceſſaries of life, that this part of the Kingdom is reduced to a ſituation moſt ſeriouſly diſtreſsful, and which imperiouſly calls for prompt and effectual relief.

2. That the War is the principal cauſe of theſe evils.

3. That we are convinced that an immediate Peace is the only event which can effectually remove theſe general and increaſing calamities; that Peace can alone give activity to our ſtagnant commerce, by opening to us thoſe Continental Marts from which we are excluded; that Peace can alone reſtore that confidence at home and abroad, which is ſo eſſential to the exiſtence and advancement of our commercial proſperity.

4. That impreſſed with a conviction of theſe truths, we will humbly petition his Majeſty to make every poſſible exertion to reſtore Peace to our ſuffering Country.

Reſolved

Reſolved unanimouſly,

5thly That the Petition now read and propoſed ſhall be adopted by this Meeting.

To the King's Moſt Excellent Majeſty.

Sire,

WE, your Majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal ſubjects, the Merchants, Wool-Staplers, Mill-Owners, Manufacturers, and others connected with the Woollen-Manufactures of Bradford, in Yorkſhire, and its neighbourhood, with hearts full of affection and loyalty to your Majeſty's Perſon and Government, do humbly approach the Throne in the language of ſupplicants, ſuffering ſevere diſtreſs, and apprehenſive of every conceivable addition thereto, if your Majeſty's wiſdom and benign regards for the intereſt of your People do not intervene to relieve us from our deplorable eſtate.

We do therefore humbly petition your Majeſty to exert your high prerogative in reſtoring to us the bleſſings of Peace; and in bringing to a ſpeedy period a War which now at leaſt threatens every calamity to our Country, and which, whatever was its character at its commencement, can from this moment be pregnant only with increaſing ruin.

But with the fulleſt confidence in your Majeſty's wiſdom, we addreſs you only with that modeſty of ſupplicants, which declines the ſuggeſtion of any means, but with the full and undoubted conviction that we ſpeak the words of truth and wiſdom.

And we farther beg leave moſt humbly to repreſent to your Majeſty, that in our preſent exhauſted ſtate, deſerted by almoſt all our Allies, the half of Europe confederating to our ruin or depreſſion, we ſee no probability of obtaining that ſucceſs which was not earned in our higheſt vigour, and that no ſucceſs can compenſate the Nation for the additional evils which the proſecution of the War muſt inevitably occaſion.

And we further humbly preſume to repreſent to your Majeſty thoſe particular grievances under which your Petitioners ſuffer.

We are oppreſſed with burdens which reduce wealth to mediocrity, mediocrity to poverty, and which leave the poor man deſtitute: our manufactures are daily declining; great numbers of our artizans are without employment; our commerce is nearly ſuſpended, and almoſt every port in Europe ſhut to our exports. Theſe evils, combined with an enormouſly high price of grain, and all other neceſſaries of life, which, if continued, threatens famine and death, form indeed an awful groupe of calamities which juſtify the moſt melancholy apprehenſions.

Deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of theſe general and increaſing evils, and convinced that in whole, or in part, they have been the reſult of this diſaſtrous War; that Peace may much brighten, if it cannot wholly reverſe this gloomy ſcene; but that War muſt every day blacken it more and more, we have preſumed to approach your Majeſty's royal preſence with this our humble Petition. Our prayer is ſhort, but comprehenſive. That your Ma-

jeſty

jesty will be pleased to pursue such measures as to your Majesty's wisdom and goodness shall appear most likely to restore to us the blessings of Peace.

Resolved unanimously.

6. That Willam Wilberforce, Esq; and the Honourable Henry Lascelles be requested to present this our Petition to the King.

Resolved unanimously.

7. That the thanks of this Meeting be given to those Trustees who convened it.

Resolved unanimously.

8. That the thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. George Walker, for his able support on this occasion.

Resolved unanimously.

9. That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Chairman, for his impartial, manly, and proper conduct in the Chair.

BENJAMIN KAYE, Chairman.

Paper VII.

WAKEFIELD, *30th January*, 1801.

At a very numerous and respectable Meeting of the Merchants, Wool-Staplers, Manufacturers, and other Tradesmen of this Town and Neighbourhood, connected with the Woollen Manufactory, held at the Moot Hall this Day, called by the Constable, in consequence of a Requisition to him for that Purpose,

(WILLIAM DAWSON, Esq; in the Chair)

RESOLVED, by a very great majority, present at this Meeting, that it appears,

1. That most of the industrious and laborious families in this town and neighbourhood, who have hitherto supported themselves by their labour in the Woollen Manufactory, are now reduced to extreme distress.

2. That many of the lesser Manufacturers are daily sinking into a state of insolvency.

3. That most of the ports on the Continent of Europe being now closed against us, our more wealthy Manufacturers are thereby deprived of a market for their goods, and are under the necessity of dismissing a great proportion of their workmen, who, in consequence thereof, have been obliged to apply for parochial relief.

4. That our poor rates have in the last few years increased beyond all former example.

5. That our taxes have increased in as great or greater proportion, and in addition to these evils every kind of provisions, but particularly corn, hath risen to a most extravagant price.

6. That

6. That the loſs of our trade and the want of employment to the preſent extent, the heavy demands upon us for poor rates and taxes, and the high price of corn and other neceſſaries of life were unknown to this Country before the unfortunate War in which we are engaged.

7. That the War is one great cauſe of theſe complicated diſtreſſes, that if it be continued the deſtruction of our trade and the abſolute ruin of very great numbers of us appears inevitable, and that it is a duty we owe to our King, our Country, and our families humbly to lay our deplorable ſituation before his Majeſty, and petition him to adopt ſuch meaſures as he in his wiſdom may ſee fit, for the purpoſe of obtaining a ſpeedy Peace.

8. Reſolved by a very great majority, that the Petition now produced, and read by the Chairman, be adopted, and that William Wilberforce, Eſq; and the Hon. Henry Laſcelles, our County Members, be requeſted to preſent the ſame to the King.

9. That a Committee be appointed to carry theſe Reſolutions into effect, and that the Gentlemen who ſigned the Requiſition to the Conſtable, be of the Committee with any other Gentlemen who are inclined to give their aſſiſtance.

10. That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Chairman, for his able and impartial conduct in the Chair.

WILLIAM DAWSON, Chairman.

Paper VIII.

PROTEST.

WE, the under-ſigned Clergy, Land Owners, Merchants, Wool-Staplers, and Tradeſmen in Wakefield do openly proteſt againſt a Meeting held this Day in the Moot Hall, in conſequence of a Requiſition of certain Merchants, Wool-Staplers, Manufacturers, and others concerned in the Woollen-Manufactory; becauſe we conceive that the ſaid Meeting was very unſeaſonably, partially, and prematurely called. Unſeaſonably with reſpect to the Day: partially, as excluding the Clergy, Land Owners, and General Commercial and Trading Intereſt of the Town; prematurely, as being convened before the ſubſtance of his Majeſty's gracious Speech to the Imperial Parliament (which was daily to be expected) and their ſubſequent deliberations thereupon, could poſſibly be known.

W. Crowder
L. A. Tottenham
J. M. Freeman, Clerk
T. Rogers, Clerk
H. Peterſon
H. Andrews
A. Peterſon
W. Steer
D. Smallpage
J. Shackleton
J. Totteuham
W. Whitaker
Jer. Naylor
M. Bacon, D. D.
R. Munkhouſe, D. D.
F. Maud
D. Parkhill, Retired Captain R. Invalids, and ſixty-eight others

WAKEFIELD, *30th January*, 1801.

Paper IX.

* *REQUISITION*

To William Wrighſon, Eſq; of Cuſworth.

Sir,

WE whoſe names are ſubſcribed, requeſt you, in purſuance of the power intruſted to you by the laſt Meeting held at York, for the purpoſe of conſidering a Requiſition there ſubmitted to their conſideration, to call another Meeting of Gentlemen friendly to the object of that Requiſition, to conſider the propriety of applying to the High-Sheriff to aſſemble a General Meeting of the Freeholders of this County, in order that they may have an opportunity humbly to petition the Throne, on the preſent melancholy criſis of Public Affairs.

Henry Peirſe, Eſq,	W. Bailey, M. D.
Hon. Tho. Monſon	General John Hale
Wm. Milbanke, Eſq.	Gregory Elſley, Eſq.
S. Crompton, Eſq.	John Hutton, Eſq.
M. Dodſworth, Eſq.	G. Wyvill
Simon Tho. Scroope, Eſq.	Wareop Conſett, Eſq.
Thomas Meynell, Eſq.	T. Wycliffe, Eſq.
Anthony Hammond, Eſq.	Francis Blackburne

Paper X.

LEEDS, *February* 14*th*, 1801.

WE whoſe names are under written, concurring entirely in a deſire for Peace with the Merchants and Manufacturers who met at the Mixed Cloth-Hall in Leeds on the 13th Day of January laſt: but diſſenting from them in our ideas of the propriety of the meaſures then adopted, and on which meaſures ſignatures to a Petition have been obtained in this town and neighbourhood, deſire to make known our reaſons of our diſſent.

Firſt, we conceive that the publiſhing our fears and diſtreſſes to our enemies has a direct tendency to incite them to prolong the War, or to demand ſuch terms of Peace as are inadmiſſible.

Second, we cannot concur in an unqualified Petition for Peace (even ſuppoſing his Majeſty able to obtain it) becauſe the French in every change of their fluctuating Government, have hitherto refuſed repeated ſolicitations from his Majeſty, to ſtate on what terms they are willing to make Peace; a Petition therefore for ſuch a Peace as our enemies may now be willing to make, may be to aſk for what would deſtroy our commerce and enſlave our Country.

Third, we cannot conſiſtently with truth, adopt any meaſures which appear to us to inſinuate that his Majeſty is not diſpoſed to procure, as ſoon as poſſible, a ſecure Peace, ſince he not only has offered what we conceive to be equitable terms of accommodation, but

* Sent in or near February, 1801.

not has even conſented to a Naval Armiſtice, as a prelude to a General Peace, a circumſtance never before conceded, until a Negotiation had actually commenced, or Preliminaries of Peace had been ſigned. *

Fourth, We conſider the meaſures adopted at the Cloth-Hall to have been peculiarly ill-timed, when the Northern Powers are attempting, by a breach of the Law of Nations, and of their Treaties with this Kingdom, to deſtroy the great bulwark of our defence, (under Divine Providence) the ſuperiority of our Navy; without which neither our Commerce, nor our Independence as a Nation, can be preſerved.

J. Brooke, Mayor
John Beckett
John Calverley
Wm. Cookſon
R. R. Bramley
Wm. Hey
Henry Hall
Peter Haddon
Thomas Lloyd
W. Thompſon
John Lee
Wm. Simpſon
Wm. Gott, and 145 others

Paper XI.

Amended Requiſition propoſed by the Editor to Wm. Wrightſon, Eſq. and R. S. Milnes, Eſq.

To the High-Sheriff of the County of York.

Sir,

WE, whoſe names are ſubſcribed, requeſt you, at as early a day as may be convenient, to call a General Meeting of the Freeholders of this County, in order that they may have an opportunity to petition the King for a Speedy Peace; and that his Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed to call to his counſels Statesmen who have uniformly manifeſted their deſire to preſerve or reſtore Peace with France, as the moſt likely means to procure a ſpeedy termination of this unfortunate War, on terms ſafe and equitable to Great-Britain.

* See the King's declaration dated October 1797, after the unſucceſsful Negociation for Peace at Liſle; and the official account of the Negociation for a Naval Armiſtice in Auguſt and September laſt, as laid before both Houſes of Parliament, Nov. 24 and 25.

Paper

Paper XII.

Amended Requiſition, altered by the Editor, and approved by Mr. Fox.

To the High-Sheriff of the County of York.

Sir,

WE, whoſe names are ſubſcribed, requeſt you, at as early a day as may be convenient, to call a General Meeting of the Freeholders of this County, in order that they may have an opportunity to petition the King for a ſpeedy Peace, and that his Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed to remove from his counſels Perſons in whom the Public cannot confide, becauſe they are conſidered incapable, at this ſtormy criſis, to conduct the Affairs of the Nation; and particularly from their having ſupported all the moſt objectionable meaſures unfortunately purſued by the late Adminiſtration, unable to effect a Peace on ſafe and equitable terms, and thus to reſcue the Country out of that calamitous ſituation into which they contributed to throw it.

NUMBER

NUMBER XIV.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence reſpecting the* Requiſition *adopted by the* Meeting *at York on the 7th of February*, 1798; *and other Matters immediatcly ſubſequent to it.*

LETTER I.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* NORTHUMBERLAND.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 10th*, 1798.

My Lord,

BY the direction of the Committee at York, I have the honour to inform your Grace, that the Meeting on the 7th inſtant unanimouſly reſolved to ſign the Requiſition, to appoint a Committee of 40 Gentlemen to promote the object of it, and to publiſh the incloſed Paper, as the Addreſs of the Meeting to the Freeholders of Yorkſhire. We flatter ourſelves that what has been done will meet your approbation, particularly that your Grace will approve the moderation of the Addreſs, and the views held forth in it.

The firſt reſolution of the Committee was, that as in theſe eventful times a change of ſentiment in ſo many months may have happened to ſome of thoſe Gentlemen who ſigned the Requiſition in the ſummer, or for prudential reaſons they may not now wiſh to ſtand for-

ward, every perſon who had ſigned the Requiſition, and was not preſent on the 7th inſt. ſhould be informed that his name ſhould be ſtruck off the Liſt, on ſignifying to me or the Committee, that he wiſhed it withdrawn. We are very certain, that we may, and we do fully rely on your Grace's unaltered ſentiments and continued ſupport. Yet in compliance with the General Reſolution of the Committee, I requeſt your Grace to favour me with your authority to annex your name to the Requiſition *; now, that it has been reſolved by the Meeting unanimouſly to ſign it, which implies, though it was not expreſsly declared that the Meeting of the County of York will be called.

I beg leave to add, that we apprehend it to be very probable that a Sheriff appointed by the Miniſter, when ſuch a Requiſition was known to be pending, may refuſe to comply with our requeſt. In that caſe, we ſhall be obliged, in compliance with the late Act for regulating Meetings unauthorized by the Sheriff, to advertiſe the Meeting ourſelves in the manner preſcribed by that Law. And therefore I requeſt, in caſe the Sheriff ſhould return a negative to the Requiſition, that we may have authority from your Grace to annex your name to the Advertiſement which will then be neceſſary.

I have the pleaſure to inform your Grace that the number of Gentlemen who had

* On the Editor's private application many months before, the Duke of Northumberland, Earl Thanet, &c. had tranſmitted to him, in the moſt handſome manner, their ſignature to this Requiſition.

ſigned

ſigned the Requiſition was, on Friday laſt, 138. It probably is much increaſed ſince that time *.

I am, my Lord,
With great reſpect,
Your Grace's moſt obedient ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER II.

From the DUKE *of* NORTHUMBERLAND *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE,
Feb. 14*th*, 1798.

Sir,

I Had the pleaſure of receiving your letter, incloſing the Addreſs of Mr. Wrightſon to the Freeholders of the County, by yeſterday's poſt. I extremely approve of the moderation and firmneſs of that Addreſs. In times of miſrepreſentation like the preſent, it is impoſſible to be too clear and diſtinct in explaining one's intentions and views; and I am happy to perceive that the Meeting at York have moſt explicitly declared, that it is by lawful and pacific means, and by thoſe means

* Such was the hope entertained by the Meeting aſſembled on the 7th of Feb. Their number was about fourſcore Gentlemen, whoſe ſentiments of independence and zeal for the true principles of the Conſtitution intitled them to the confidence of their Country: many of them alſo poſſeſſed very conſiderable weight from their landed property. The zeal and unanimity manifeſted by ſo numerous a body of men, thus compoſed, ſeemed to juſtify their expectation of ſupport from the great maſs of the Freeholders. But it was ſoon found that they had formed an inadequate conception of the influence of their Opponents.

alone, that they aim at obtaining a change of men and meaſures, not only beneficial, but now become neceſſary for the ſalvation of the Country. In ſuch a purſuit, by ſuch means, I am moſt willing to co-operate with them, hoping by ſuch a method to preſerve the Monarchy, and bring back the Conſtitution to that moſt enlightened and admirable ſyſtem which was eſtabliſhed at the Revolution. Animated with this wiſh, I have not the leaſt objection to unite with my Brother Freeholders in applying to the Sheriff for a County Meeting, and, if he ſhould refuſe it, in having my name ſubſcribed to the Advertiſement, as one of the perſons calling the Meeting, agreeable to the Law as it now ſtands. I truſt, however, if the application to the Sheriff is ſigned by a ſufficient number of reſpectable names, that he will not refuſe to call the Meeting himſelf *.

I have the pleaſure to be,
With great regard,
Sir, your moſt obedient ſervant,
NORTHUMBELAND.

* The Editor's beſt thanks are due, and he offers them with grateful reſpect to the Duke of Northumberland, for his permiſſion to publiſh this letter. It breathes the true ſpirit of patriotiſm, free, generous, and determined, but guided by reaſon, moderation, and prudence; firm to ſupport the principles of the Conſtitution, by all legal means of exertion, but cautious to explain, diſtinctly, that to employ thoſe means alone he ſtood pledged to his Country. The Anceſtors of this virtuous Nobleman, when united with other Great Barons, and with the Freeholders attached to Saxon Liberty, ſucceſsfully reſiſted the tyranny of the Norman Kings. The Howards and Percys of this age ſtill manifeſt the juſt and manly ſpirit of their Forefathers; and though the preſent is a bloodleſs ſtruggle to ſubdue Corruption by the perſeverance of a virtuous Oppoſition, it is not leſs difficult and dubious than the conflict with Prerogative in paſt ages; and whether

LETTER III.

From EARL THANET *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

HOTHFIELD, *Feb.* 18*th*, 1798.

Sir,

I AM very happy to ſee the intention of calling a Meeting of the Freeholders of Yorkſhire is not to be abandoned, for I am induced to think that would not be the caſe if the ſentiments of the County at large were as unfavourable to our ſentiments as they have been very generally repreſented. The Committee are perfectly at liberty to annex my name to the Requiſition to the Sheriff, or, in caſe of his refuſal, in the mode preſcribed by the late Act. I ſhall not be wanting, upon any occaſion, to do my utmoſt to promote the objects they have in view.

And I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

THANET.

In caſe this ſhould be longer in coming to hand than it ſhould be, I think it right to ſay

ther crowned with ſucceſs, or baffled by the arts of their opponents, the Noble Patriots of this age deſerve, and will receive from the gratitude of the Public, an equal ſhare of their eſteem.

It ought not to be forgotten, that on the late alarm of Invaſion by the Military Uſurper of France, the Duke of Northumberland advanced among the foremoſt in zeal for the defence of the Country. The Percy Tenantry, in number 1482 men, are commanded by his eldeſt ſon, Earl Percy. The Officers and men are all his Tenants. They conſiſt of ſix Troops of Cavalry, and ſeventeen Companies of Riflemen. The Cavalry armed, paid, and clothed by their patriotic Landlord; the Infantry alſo accoutred, clothed, and paid by him: their rifle-guns alone were provided by Government.

that having accidentally burnt your letter in which your direction was, I have incloſed it to a friend of mine likely to know your addreſs, or to find it out by enquiry *.

* An anſwer addreſſed, without apparent offence to a Judge in Court, on a ſudden emergency, and imperfectly heard by a witneſs, had nearly coſt this Noble Earl his right hand: at leaſt ſuch rigour was threatened; and on the ground of an obſolete Law, too barbarous to have been executed for ages, the momentary indiſcretion alluded to, which produced no ill effect whatever, and with candour could not be thought to indicate any ill deſign, might have been puniſhed with this odious cruelty. At the time when Earl Thanet was thus threatened, the infatuation of the Public was extreme, and Loyalty, wild with panic fears, was ready to ſupport Government in every ſtretch of power, in every act of rigour againſt the Advocates of Liberty. Had the menaced execution taken place, inſtead of being ſhocked at a barbarity ſo long unheard of in this Country, many, probably, would have rejoiced at it. But fortunately for the intereſts of peace and humanity, the Miniſters thought fit to ſheath the ſword of vengeance, and the ſavage paſſions of their adherents remained ungratified. After he had been thus menaced, and after he had endured with becoming fortitude the long impriſonment to which he had been ſentenced, the Noble Lord on his enlargement betrayed no heat of paſſion, no ſymptom of a mind either thirſting for revenge, or yielding to intimidation. With firmneſs, but with temper and moderation, he perſevered in his oppoſition to the pernicious ſyſtem of the Court; and when ſome private Perſons in Yorkſhire endeavoured to aſſemble that County, and animate their Fellow Citizens, by legal means, to reſiſt the dangerous aggrandizement of the Crown, and haſten the return of Peace, he frankly concurred in their meaſures, and gave them his ſupport with the courage of conſcious integrity. In Kent alſo he acted with the ſame manly zeal for ſimilar purpoſes; and at Meetings of the County, merited and obtained the general eſteem by his judicious conduct, and by his forcible, though unpracticed eloquence.—The candid man will neither deny, nor attempt to juſtify the indiſcretion of a moment; but he will ſay with the Editor, that it has been nobly atoned for, by a ſeries of public-ſpirited and prudent conduct, which intitles Earl Thanet to the ſincere eſteem of every Friend to Conſtitutional Liberty.

Under all theſe circumſtances, it was the Editor's wiſh, and if his Lodſhip's conſent were obtained, it was his duty to produce this letter, which he conceives to be unexceptionably proper. He returns Earl Thanet his thanks for the conſent he granted him in the moſt obliging manner; and gladly avails himſelf of this opportunity to expreſs his gratitude and reſpect.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

From Sir RALPH MILBANKE *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

SEAHAM, *Feb.* 18*th*, 1798.

Dear Sir,

I HAD the pleaſure of receiving your's of the 9th inſt. with the Addreſs to the Freeholders of Yorkſhire, and the other private Papers, which I think extremely proper. I will therefore trouble you to add my name to the liſt of Requiſitors, and if I am able to procure the names of any friends, you may depend upon hearing from me. The only doubt I have in my mind is reſpecting the propriety of chooſing the preſent time, when there ſeems to be a general inclination in the Nation (if we may judge from the Subſcriptions and Addreſſes) to perſevere in proſecuting the War, neither has the Nation yet felt, as it will do, the load of the late additional taxes. Nevertheleſs if it is your opinion, and the opinion of thoſe reſpectable Gentlemen who met at York, that it is beſt to chooſe the preſent moment to endeavour to ſtop the ruinous meaſures now carrying on by the Miniſtry, I am ready to give every aſſiſtance in my power.

I am, Dear Sir,

Ever your's, very ſincerely,

RALPH MILBANKE.

LETTER V.

From Sir LIONEL COPLEY, Bart. *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Sir,

I SINCERELY hope that my abſence from Town will not preclude me the honour of having my name annexed to the Requiſition for calling the Meeting to take into conſideration meaſures of ſuch great conſequence at this important criſis. If ever I was a friend to the object propoſed by the Friends of the Meeting, the experience of every day muſt tend to confirm me in my opinion; and I have taken the earlieſt opportunity of aſſuring you of it, and of thanking you for the communications you have been ſo good as to make me. When I laſt ſaw Sir William Milner, I took the liberty of requeſting him to take care that my name ſhould not be left out, in caſe the Gentlemen who were to meet at York on the 7th of February ſhould be of opinion, that it might be attended with ſucceſs *,

I have the honour to be,
With the greateſt reſpect,
Sir,
Your very faithful,
and humble ſervant,
L. COPLEY.

ST. JAMES's HOTEL, *Jermyn-Street*,
Feb. 21ſt, 1798.

LETTER

* Sir Lionel Copley deſerves to be eſteemed as a firm and determined friend to Liberty in the moſt dangerous times. The Editor therefore wiſhed to preſerve this memorial of his zeal to ſupport

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* LEEDS *.

BURTON-HALL, BEDALE. *Yorkſhire, Feb. 12th, 1793.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to incloſe for your Grace's inſpection the Addreſs to the Freeholders of Yorkſhire, which was unanimouſly paſſed at a Meeting of nearly four-ſcore Gentlemen at York, on the 7th of this month; and alſo a copy of the Requiſition which was ſigned that day, and which had on the 9th of February 138 names ſubſcribed to it. A Committee of 40 Gentlemen was appointed to promote the object of the Requiſition; and in compliance with their wiſh, I take an early opportunity, after my return home, to communicate theſe Papers to your Grace. If the temper and moderate views which the Meeting have ſhown in their Addreſs, and to which they are determined invariably to adhere, are fortunate enough to meet your Grace's approbation, they hope to

ſupport the meaſures taken in Yorkſhire at this time, to animate the Freeholders to a juſt and legal oppoſition, and to lay before the Legiſlature their general diſſatisfaction with the miſconduct of Miniſters. His acknowledgments are due to Sir L. Copley, for his frank compliance with the Editor's requeſt, and he pays them with ſincere reſpect.

* A ſimilar letter was addreſſed to Lord George Cavendiſh. No anſwer was received from the Duke of Leeds or Lord G. Cavendiſh.

be

be favoured with your ſupport, and particularly with your ſignature to the Requiſition*.

I have the honour to be

Your Grace's

moſt obedient ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER VII.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Durham, March 7th, 1793.

My Dear Sir,

A VARIETY of engagements, and a wiſh not to ſit down to write to you until I

* After this letter to the Duke of Leeds, and the preceding one to the Duke of Northumberland had been diſpatched by the Editor, many more were written to other Gentlemen with all poſſible expedition. But diſcouraging appearances were almoſt immediately obſerved; and it ſoon became evident that the threats of Invaſion by the Directory of France, operating on minds already agitated with the dread of Innovation, would excite in Yorkſhire oppoſition not leſs furious or leſs formidable than had been encountered before by the Friends of the Conſtitution, when they defended the Bill of Rights without ſucceſs. Before the end of March the Editor found that the moſt zealous and active Friends of Peace and Reform in that County conceived it abſolutely neceſſary to forbear any farther active endeavours to effect a General Meeting at York. The letters from his friends at Durham and Benton, which follow this letter to the Duke of Leeds, ſoon convinced the Editor that nothing better could be expected from the Counties of Durham and Northumberland, nor even from Middleſex and the Metropolis. The arts of the Miniſter, who ſkilfully availed himſelf of every occurrence to miſrepreſent his Opponents, again were completely ſucceſsful; Reformers were again defamed and calumniated by the bigoted or hypocritical adherents of the Miniſtry, in terms too groſs for repetition; and again the calumny and abuſe were believed by a large proportion of the too credulous Public: and thus a part of the People were even taught to deteſt the name of Liberty. Patriotiſm became odious to them, and Reform a bye-word, ſynonimous to Revolution.

was

was pretty much at leiſure, have made me very long delay thanking you for your communications on the ſubject of your Meeting at York. I had indeed a farther reaſon, and that was a hope of being able to have accompanied my letter with a Copy of two Agricultural Eſſays of mine, which are now publiſhing by the Philoſophical Society of Newcaſtle, and which ought to have been ready a month ago. Some corrections are however neceſſary, from the Preſs not having been corrected; It has alſo been ſuggeſted that an explanation of ſome Chymical terms would contribute to making them more uſeful. When theſe are completed I ſhall receive a parcel, and will requeſt your acceptance of a Copy for yourſelf, and for any Agricultural Friend of youre.

Your ſucceſs at the laſt Meeting was greater than I muſt own I expected; the idea of ſupporting Government in every meaſure, at a period of threatened Invaſion, is very general here, and I am afraid every where; and the commercial people will naturally be irritated and alarmed at the enemy's declarations againſt the trade of Great Britain. From theſe two cauſes a great acceſſion to the Miniſterial Party might be looked for; and your Meeting being ſo numerous and reſpectable is a proof, under theſe circumſtances, of very general reprobation of the Miniſter's meaſures.

The declaration is well calculated to maintain and increaſe your advantages, at leaſt it has been univerſally approved of among the

Friends

Friends to our cauſe here, as equally temperate and firm. I wiſh the other Northern Counties may be able to ſupport you; but I think they are not well diſpoſed at preſent. We are certainly not ſtronger than in 1795, perhaps leſs ſo; indeed men return ſo ſlowly to their ſenſes, that it ſeems barely poſſible that we ſhould eſcape from National Bankruptcy and ruin. By the laſt return of the Revenue laid before Parliament, it appears that there is a deficiency in the taxes laid on ſince 1793 of full two millions, and there is probably a further deficiency in the old taxes. The News-papers erroneouſly ſtate the falling off in the taxes laid on this War at rather more than 3,000,000; but this is for want of conſidering that there has not been a whole year's receipt of the taxes of 1797. By multiplying the produce of theſe taxes for the laſt quarter ending Jan. 5th, 1798, by four, the exact deficit of this year's taxes is 2,043,832.—When we add to this the ſum ſtill wanting for the ſupplies of the year, the arrears in every department, and the expence of winding up the War accounts, the proſpect becomes as bad as the moſt determined of our enemies could wiſh it.

Under theſe circumſtances you will readily believe that I do not recover from my old deſpondence; but what I now more eſpecially dread is, that the alarm of Invaſion, and the inability of Miniſters to raiſe money by the uſual way, will afford them a pretext of ſeizing by a bold Requiſition on the property of the Kingdom, and perhaps of acquiring

quiring means ſufficiently extenſive to eſtabliſh a Government purely military.—A. B. writes to our friend at Benton that he has heard, from a reſpectable authority, that the Cabinet have it at preſent in contemplation to repeat the ſuſpenſion of the Habeas Corpus, to arreſt all ſuſpected perſons (a comprehenſive term) and to proclaim Military Law *. We have ſeen ſo much that a man muſt be bold to treat theſe things as impoſſible. What is worſe, a large part of the Nation would receive them with approbation.

Mr. Swinburne, late Commiſſioner for our priſoners in France, ſays that the farmers and peaſants have profited greatly by the Revolution; that they have almoſt all ſaved money, and are better clad, fed, and lodged than before it. He adds that the manufactories of cloth at Verviers, Liege, &c. are in great activity; that coarſe cloths are therefore plentiful, but fine ones ſcarce and dear. This intelligence I conſider as of great importance at this period, as it ſhews that the Directory have not prohibited Engliſh goods without there being ſubſtitutes for them.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with beſt wiſhes to you and your's,

Your ſincere friend,

J. R. FENWICK.

* Soon after the date of this letter, the Miniſter addreſſed (in Parliament) nearly the following declaration to his Countrymen. "If the meaſures which I have already taken, and thoſe which I am now projecting ſhall be found inadequate, I moſt ſolemny promiſe that ſtronger fortifications ſhall from time to time be erected around the Executive Government." After the Preſs had been ſhackled, and the Right of Free Petition had been reſtrained, after the new Treaſon law had been enacted, and the Habeas Corpus had been

LETTER VIII.

From THOMAS BIGGE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BENTON, *Thurſday, March 8th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

OUR Friends in Town had another Meeting with their Middleſex Friends laſt Saturday, and have adjourned till the 20th of April. It appears that the ſpirit of the South is moſt deplorably bad, and thoſe who ought to be acquainted with it have little hopes of any favourable change. In ſhort, alarm and infatuation are likely to be again carried to a great height, and very ſtrong meaſures are expected to be taken by Government. The ſtrange conduct* of O'Connor is an event which

been ſuſpended, what did he mean by more ſtrongly fortifying the Govetnment? Common ſenſe anſwers he muſt have meant the introduction of martial law: and the probable conſequence of that muſt have been a Military Collection of Taxes. Abhorred luſt of Power! How doſt thou ſteel the heart of Man! How doſt thou inure him to ſtifle pity and remorſe! to ſcorn the murmurs and brave the hatred of his Countrymen! and at laſt, with a mind ſternly reſolute, to contemplate a Military Deſpotiſm, deſolating and enſlaving his Country, as the completion of his plan, and the neceſſary prop of his authority!

* The conjecture of the Editor's ſagacious Correſpondent was ſoon confirmed by experience. Advantage was taken to excite ſuſpicion and alarm from the teſtimony generouſly given by ſome principal Friends of Liberty in exculpation of Mr. O'Connor, as far as their knowledge of his conduct and character extended. Their intercourſe with him in London had been neither frequent nor confidential; but it had been ſufficient to impreſs them with a favourable opinion of his principles, as well as of his talents, and they felt themſelves bound to acknowledge it in a Court of Juſtice. Circumſtances thus ſlight and inconcluſive were caught, and

which will in this view prove eminently ſerviceable to the Miniſtry. I ſhould be moſt happy to learn the ſucceſsful progreſs of your Committee in obtaining ſignatures to the intended Requiſition. Report ſays that the Duke of Northumberland has joined you, which I hope to be true. I know he entertains the higheſt reſpect for you perſonally, and I think he will not be backward whenever he meets with a reſpectable Body of Gentlemen to unite with. With every earneſt wiſh for your happineſs in private, and your ſucceſs in public,

I remain, Dear Sir,

Your's moſt truly,

THO. BIGGE.

and with eagerneſs held out by the Adherents of the Miniſter as proofs of their criminal connection with the Revolutioniſts of Ireland; and on no ſtronger grounds than theſe the enormous guilt of conſpiring the diſmemberment of Ireland and the ruin of Britain was imputed to ſome of the beſt and wiſeſt Patriots of our Country. But Time, the Revealer of truth, and the Friend of injured virtue, has rendered the juſtification of their conduct reſpecting Mr. O'Connor wholly ſuperfluous. Lord Grenville and Lord Spencer, Mr. Windham and Mr. Pitt himſelf may now be cited as their compurgators. The union of the three Ex-Miniſters with the perſons alluded to, and their adoption of their political views reſpecting Ireland and foreign politics, completely demonſtrate the falſehood and the futility of the former imputations; and doubtleſs Mr. Pitt muſt have diſowned and abandoned the moſt remote ſuſpicion of their guilt, when he recommended Mr. Fox and his friends, on the late compulſive reſignation of Mr. Addington, &c. as fit perſons to ſhare the confidence of his Majeſty.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *March 25th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

I AM much flattered by your approbation of my Eſſays; had they been intended for the public eye, I ſhould have thrown them into a ſomewhat different form, and have ſought more frequently for illuſtrations from the familiar operations of huſbandry; but the ſame facts which would have weighed with practical huſbandmen, would have been overlooked by men to whom the operations of huſbandry were wholly unknown. From this circumſtance they are ill adapted to the bulk of Agricultural Readers.

I agree with you altogether, Sir, on the advantages which may be derived from your Yorkſhire Aſſociation, ſhould the Nation open its eyes to its real ſituation, and to the only means of bettering it. Many opportunities of doing good have been loſt for want of being prepared to take advantage of them. This cannot now be the caſe with you. You are numerous and reſpectable; and being already embodied, and your ſentiments being known to each other, you can act with a promptitude and unanimity which, under other circumſtances, would be unattainable. It is true, indeed, that the diſpoſition of the public mind will probably not afford you an opportunity

opportunity of coming forward; but were this almoſt certain, ſtill I think your proceedings would be juſtified in whatever point of view they were conſidered. As to your having been deceived in the expectations you had formed, it is not to be wondered at; a man muſt have entertained a very mean opinion of the Engliſh People to foreſee the line of conduct they have purſued; beſides the ſeries of events which have enabled the Miniſter to retain the ſupport of the commercial and landed intereſt, while he is purſuing meaſures that muſt ultimately prove fatal to both, are ſo much out of the ordinary courſe of things that no man could calculate for them. While therefore I feel a ſtrong conviction that all our attempts to procure Peace, to ward off National Bankruptcy, and to ſave the remains of our Conſtitution will be fruitleſs, I ſtill view with reſpect and gratitude the exertions of your friends, and would certainly join in any ſimilar undertaking here, were it to be judged adviſable. The want of hope, however, naturally renders a man's exertions leſs regular and leſs vigorous, and I am ſenſible that, when left to myſelf, I withdraw almoſt entirely my attention from political matters to fix it where it may afford more ſatisfaction at leaſt, if not more advantage. I dare nevertheleſs aſſure you, that as far as I can aid the honourable cauſe we have engaged in, you will not find me wanting; and in the mean-time, ſhould I poſſeſs ſufficient leiſure, our friend at Benton will receive all the aſſiſt-

ance I can give him in his plan of public inſtruction *. With a view even to political conſiderations, without taking into account the important object of morality, I think we cannot better promote the general good than by following up that plan with vigour.

Mrs. Fenwick joins in beſt wiſhes to Mrs. Wyvill, yourſelf, and little ones. Adieu.

Your's ſincerely,

J. R. FENWICK.

* Mr. Bigge had juſt then engaged in the taſk of editing a monthly publication, intitled the Oeconomiſt, which was carried on for two years with the zeal of honeſt and enlightened Patriotiſm, under every diſadvantage and every ſpecies of hoſtility which Miniſters could oppoſe to prevent its circulation, except that of legal proſecution. The Bookſellers were intimidated by the menaces of the Miniſter's adherents in London and in the Country: many of them refuſed to continue the ſale of the Oeconomiſt; the ſupply was interrupted, and the demand was leſſened: at laſt the number of copies ſold, which had been about 10,000, was thus reduced to not more than 700 in each month.

It contained many excellent Papers on Agricultural ſubjects, as well as on the more intereſting topics of Morality and Politics; and it was occaſionally enlivened by Papers of Wit and Humour. Of theſe, ſome of the beſt were furniſhed by the worthy Editor, and others by his Coadjutors in Northumberland and Durham; and one diſtinguiſhed perſon in the South of England tranſmitted a few pieces of great importance.—The reſt were of inferior value, and came from other Correſpondents; but their admiſſion was almoſt unavoidable, from the Editor's natural complaiſance to his friends; and as the miſcellany drew near its concluſion, from his wearineſs and deſpondence, the effect of the over-bearing oppoſition of his adverſaries, and the wretched infatuation of the Public.

LETTER

LETTER X.

From J. R. Fenwick, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. Wyvill.

Durham, *April 9th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

AS You were ſo friendly as to expreſs your fears that the exerciſe of my profeſſion would expoſe me to a recurrence of my late complaint, I cannot refrain from informing you that I have come to a reſolution of declining it. I wiſh this determination to be kept ſecret for the preſent, as there are circumſtances which oblige me to defer for ſome time the ſtep I have reſolved to take; early in the ſummer however I ſhall carry it into execution; and as my preſent ſtate of health fully authorizes me to refuſe night attendance, or to expoſe myſelf to cold or great fatigue, I truſt there is no ground for apprehenſion that I ſhall ſuffer in the mean-time. My future plans are yet uncertain; but my chief object will be quiet and retirement; and it is my good fortune to find in Mrs. Fenwick a perfect accordance with my wiſhes in this reſpect. The difficulty is at preſent to find a ſituation in which quiet can be enjoyed.

It gave me great pleaſure to find from Lady Milbanke that you enjoy ſuch good health; ſhe told me that ſhe never ſaw you looking better; your family I hope are equally well, and that domeſtic enjoyments compenſate for the anxiety which public affairs muſt give you.

You will ſee by the Papers that they are at length making their approaches againſt the laſt bulwark of Britiſh Freedom, the Liberty of the Preſs; affecting, as uſual, the greateſt veneration and tenderneſs for that which they have determined to deſtroy. Laudandum et tollendum has long been their maxim in every thing that regards the foundation of the Conſtitution. Such meaſures muſt greatly increaſe the violence of Party, and make us more than ever a divided People. The ſupporters of Miniſtry here, and more eſpecially the military, do not conceal their conviction that the Friends of Parliamentary Reform wiſh well to the deſign of the enemy to invade and ſubdue us; nor do they much diſguiſe their hopes *that effectual meaſures will be taken to deprive us of the power of injuring our Country.* Theſe are the words of a Reverend Supporter of war and corruption. In ſuch a temper men will not hear the voice of reaſon; we muſt for a time be ſilent, and contemplate with all the fortitude we can the important events which are paſſing before us. Inactivity cannot in theſe circumſtances be a crime; if we do not ceaſe to act, the minds of our opponents will not cool; and, while paſſion and force are appealed to, our object is unattainable *. I know that ſuch an acquieſcence, though

* The principal motive which induced the Editor to prepare this Collection of Letters for publication was the wiſh to juſtify the Friends of Conſtitutional Reform by producing the teſtimony of their private and confidential Correſpondence to ſuch an extent of time, and from ſo many different writers as to afford a fair ſpecimen of the temper and views of the whole Body of Reformers. And thus he hoped by refuting various calumnies and rectifying

though only an apparent acquieſcence on our part, may be applied to bad purpoſes by our adverſaries; I feel alſo that it requires a great command over ourſelves to adopt it; but I am convinced that it will be ultimately found the moſt uſeful line of conduct; indeed that it is the only one that will not be productive of miſchief. We muſt in the mean-time conſole ourſelves with the conſciouſneſs of the purity

tifying many prejudices which had been artfully excited againſt them and their political principles, to open a proſpect of ſucceſs at ſome more favourable juncture. A ſubordinate purpoſe, and yet one of no ſmall importance, was, that by this Publication ſufficient proofs might be preſerved, that as the General Body of Men friendly to Political Reformation had conſtantly adhered to the principles of moderate Reform laid down by Mr. Pitt; ſo when his too powerful oppoſition had defeated the virtuous attempt in 1793, &c. to correct the abuſes which that Miniſter himſelf had reprobated and endeavoured to remove, when meaſures ſubverſive of Liberty and deſtructive of the remaining Rights of the People were afterwards purſued by him and his adherents, that the Body of Reformers, with their Patriotic Leaders in Parliament, exerted their utmoſt faculties to defeat thoſe pernicious meaſures, and left no legal means untried to defend the Conſtitution in its impaired ſtate, ſince the concurrence of public opinion did not enable them to improve it. And of this abundant proof has ſurely been afforded by the letters of his Correſpondents in this and the preceding Numbers.

From the general reaſoning of his excellent friend, Dr. Fenwick, in the letter before the reader, the Editor conceives that no one will diſſent; and under its intended application to the conduct of thoſe perſons who about this time ſeceded from Parliament, and of thoſe who forbore to call Public Meetings of the Freeholders, &c. with a view to oppoſe the innovations of the Miniſter, that reaſoning is ſufficiently ſupported by facts: From the letters contained in this Number, and from ſome of thoſe contained in the preceding Volume, it is evident that the power of the Government was ſtrongly ſupported by the wild infatuation of a great part of the Public, and that a continuance of active oppoſition within Parliament and without it, at this juncture, would have been unſerviceable, perhaps fatal to the cauſe of virtuous Reform, and conſequently, that their inactivity at this period of unprecedented difficulty and danger does not expoſe the Friends of Liberty to any juſt reproach, as having failed in their duty to the Community.

of our intentions, and with the remembrance that we have never ſanctioned the meaſures which have reduced us to our preſent almoſt hopeleſs ſituation. In the words of the Roman Moraliſt,

" Hic murus aheneus eſto
Nil conſcire ſibi, nulla palleſcere culpa."

Mr. Bigge and myſelf have ſome hopes of being able to ſpend a day with you in the courſe of next month, ſhould you be at home then, and diſengaged.

Mrs. Fenwick joins in beſt wiſhes to yourſelf and family.

Believe me very truly your's,

J. R. FENWICK.

LETTER XI.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *April 20th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

IT gave both Mrs. Fenwick and me great pleaſure to hear of the fortunate birth of your daughter, and we ſincerely join in wiſhing Mrs. Wyvill a ſpeedy recovery, and many years of happineſs to the little ſtranger. I truſt Mrs. Fenwick and I will have it in our power to pay our reſpects at Burton towards the end of next month, though the ſtate of the Country adds greatly to the uncertainty with which all human proſpects are always attended. Miniſters, it ſeems, have received,

or

or pretend to have received advice that the enemy propoſe to make an attempt in the neighbourhood of the Coal Works; and this very day an Army Commiſſary who lives here has had orders to repair to head quarters immediately, in conſequence of intelligence that the enemy's troops are actually embarking. Under theſe circumſtances we have thought it our duty in this town to offer our ſervices *in caſe of Invaſion*; but as we reſtrict the offer to actual Invaſion without including "*or imminent danger thereof*" I have ſome doubts whether our tender will be accepted *. If it ſhould, and the enemy ſhould execute their plans (a thing highly improbable, but not impoſſible) I ſhould then be confined by a new ſpecies of duty. I may perhaps be blamed in my preſent ſtate of health for expoſing myſelf to the fatigues which one muſt encounter if called out; but beſides my feeling ſtrongly that it is every man's duty to act in this manner who is in any degree capable of ſervice, I own I was eager to ſhow that we who have been ſo long accuſed of diſaffection are not leſs ready than the warmeſt ſupporters of Miniſters to defend the Country when expoſed

* On this occaſion there was a general concurrence of ſentiment throughout the Kingdom; and the example ſet by the Patriots of Durham was followed almoſt every where by the Friends of Reform. Among the ſimilar offers to Government from different parts of Yorkſhire, one was tranſmitted from the neighbourhood of Danby and Burton Conſtable, engaging the waggons, carts and horſes of the Editor's worthy friend, S. T. Scroope, Eſq; and of himſelf, and of their reſpective neighbours, for the public uſe, whenever wanted; and alſo offering to raiſe a Corps of Volunteers; but as the Government did not ſignify their acceptance of the offered Corps, it is unneceſſary to explain the propoſal more particularly.

to real danger. On theſe grounds I propoſed a Requiſition to the Mayor for a Public Meeting, and joined in bringing the meaſure forward this morning with a Gentleman who has diſtinguiſhed himſelf throughout by a ſteady adherence to the Church Party, in order to ſhow that on ſuch an occaſion we were ready to forget all differences of opinion. The idea was not very cordially received by the bulk of the Inhabitants; but I ſtill think that a conſiderable number will come forward when the *terms* of ſerving are better underſtood.

In order that our conduct might not be conſtrued into a change of our political ſentiments, we took care explicitly to declare our perſeverance in them, and we had the pleaſure to find that this was not the leaſt acceptable part of what paſſed at this Meeting. I hope you will approve of what we have done on the occaſion; it is ſomewhat remarkable that none of our dignified Clergy countenanced the meaſure.

I do not wonder that the Miniſter's friends wiſh to repreſent your fable as ſeditious, it applies too forcibly to their Patron not to excite their indignation. But indeed every thing now is treated as ſeditious which oppoſes any of their doctrines which they chooſe to propogate, or any meaſures they find it their intereſt to purſue. Their violence is probably intended to prepare the Public for Sir J. Scott's new limitations on the Liberty of the Preſs. The following inſtance of blindneſs will I think ſurpriſe you even in theſe times. A Gentleman who was in Ireland during Lord Fitzwilliam's

Fitzwilliam's Adminiſtration, and who then deſcribed the Iriſh as a contented and loyal Nation, and who has juſt returned from a ſecond reſidence of ſix months among them, was ſpeaking the other day in the moſt deplorable terms of the ſituation of that Country, declaring that he had no doubt, that were the French to land, not only the lower claſſes, but moſt of the middling claſs of people would join them. A friend of mine to whom he was ſpeaking, immediately expreſſed his aſtoniſhment that Miniſters would perſevere in their ſyſtem of coercion, but was interrupted by a ſolemn aſſurance that all the evil had ariſen from Government having been too lenient! And yet the man who ſpoke in this manner is far from being deficient in underſtanding. Believe me,

My Dear Sir,

Very truly your's,

J. R. FENWICK.

LETTER XII.

From General JOHN HALE *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

THE PLANTATION, *April* 16*th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

I HAVE read your letter, and think the Fable * too applicable to the rigorous meaſures which have lately been adopted in

* The Fable alluded to by the Editor's worthy Correſpondent has not been preſerved.

Ireland,

Ireland, perhaps ſome may compare your horſe to the other, who having a diſpute with a ſtag, called in the man to his aſſiſtance; but perceived too late, that, inſtead of an ally, he had found a maſter. "Non hominem dorſo, non frænum depulit ore." However that may be, the only object to be conſidered at preſent is, in my opinion, the defence of the Country; the danger is great and imminent. We muſt get rid of our enemies, if we can, and think of our grievances afterwards, if we pleaſe. I think that a general Armed Aſſociation is the moſt likely means to ſave us; and I am not without hopes that ſuch a meaſure will be adopted. Have you read Mr. Aufrere's pamphlet? It draws a dreadful picture of the atrocious behaviour of the French Army in Suabia. We muſt not ſuffer ſuch Trees of Liberty to grow in this Country. My family join in compliments to Mrs. Wyvill and yourſelf; and I remain always,

My Dear Sir,

Very truly your's,

J. HALE.

LETTER XIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* General JOHN HALE.

BURTON-HALL, *April 18th*, 1798.

My Dear General,

I SHOULD heartily approve an Armed Aſſociation for the defence of the Country. The National Independence muſt be ſupported.

ed. I have for ſome time wiſhed to ſee proper meaſures taken in Yorkſhire for that purpoſe. And if you and Lord Dundas ſhould be diſpoſed to call a Meeting to take this ſubject into conſideration, I certainly will attend, and give any little aſſiſtance in my power to carry into effect ſome well-conſidered plan, which you and his Lordſhip may bring forward.

Mrs. Wyvill begs to join me in compliments to Mrs. Hale and yourſelf; and I am,

Dear General,

With great regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XIV.

From WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

CUSWORTH, *April 25th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

I WISH to take your opinion on the propriety of the Friends of the Requiſition coming forward, at this moment, with ſome meaſure declaratory of their determination to exert themſelves to the utmoſt to repel all foreign attacks, and to rouze the ſpirit of the Country againſt all foreign interference, and to warn the People againſt the inſidious practices of the French; calling for unanimity againſt the common enemy, as the only means of preſerving what remains of our valuable

luable Conſtitution, and enabling us hereafter to enforce thoſe neceſſary Reforms, without which we cannot have a wiſe or beneficial Government. If the policy and propriety of ſome meaſure of this ſort ſtrikes you as it does me, I wiſh you would put ſomething on paper for the purpoſe. It might be done by correſponding with the perſons who have ſigned, and be publiſhed by the Committee at York, without giving Gentlemen, who are now diſperſed, the trouble of attending.

I have no doubt that a meaſure of this ſort would diſpoſe the public mind to attend to us at a future time with cordiality and confidence, and would aſſign the beſt reaſon for our not acting on our laſt Addreſs at this time.

I am, with great eſteem,

Your's moſt faithfully,

WILLIAM WRIGHTSON.

LETTER XV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *April 27th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

I HAVE ſeen the Gentlemen I expected. I mentioned what you had propoſed to me, and told them my opinion, that it would certainly be a prudent and proper ſtep to be taken by our friends; and I aſſured them that if it met their approbation, the labour of ſo extenſive a correſpondence ſhould not deter

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me from undertaking it. But I found them unanimous in thinking the meaſure unneceſſary, becauſe the Gentlemen of the Requiſition had come forward ſo generally in ſupport of the meaſures propoſed by Government for the defence of the Country, that no doubt of their zeal could be entertained. And therefore they thought ſuch a declaration as was propoſed would have the air of an apology coming from men, becauſe they were conſcious it was wanted. I muſt own my ſentiments remain the ſame as before. I ſtill think ſuch a declaration made by a large Meeting, or even obtained by ſignature, on private application by letter, would be in itſelf a right and proper meaſure; that it would tend much to animate the Country in defence of our National Independence; and at the ſame time very much conciliate the good opinion of thoſe who hitherto have been jealous of our intentions. But as theſe Gentlemen have given a different opinion, I think it may be expedient to drop any farther mention of it.

I ſuppoſe this will find you, my dear Sir, on the point of joining your Proviſional Cavalry. I applaud your zeal; and if not forbidden by the decencies of my profeſſion, would gladly have joined you. Be aſſured of my warmeſt good wiſhes for your ſafe return to Cuſworth, after all poſſible ſucceſs in your military undertaking *.

And believe me, your's, &c.

C. WYVILL.

* The Editor's truly patriotic friend had then raiſed a Body of Volunteer Cavalry for the defence of our National Independence againſt the attack menaced by the French Directory. At a moment

LETTER XVI.

From W. WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

My Dear Sir,

IF the meaſures I ſuggeſted can by any means be conſtrued into an apology for our paſt conduct (and we have every reaſon to know how unfairly our motives and our meaſures have been interpreted) I am ſure I ſhould be among the firſt to abandon the idea. I have not mentioned the ſubject to any one; all thoughts of it will therefore be relinquiſhed with the ſame readineſs that I ventured to call it to your conſideration. If any meaſure ſhould be adopted by the Whig Club on Tueſday, we may be more ſtrongly called upon to take ſome ſteps. And the objections, which I now conſider, both in themſelves and on account of the perſons by whom they are made, as worthy of the utmoſt attention, may not then continue to exiſt in the ſame force *.

I am your's moſt ſincerely,
W. WRIGHTSON.

CUSWORTH, *28th of April*, 1798.

ment of greater danger from the Invaſion now threatened by the Imperial Uſurper of France, Mr. Wrightſon, with equal zeal, has taken the command of a Regiment of Volunteer Infantry, embodied at Doncaſter.

* Nations, like Individuals, ſeem to be incapable of fixing their attention upon more than one object at once; from this time the attention of the Engliſh Nation was fixed on ſecuring the great object of our National Independence; with reſpect to the abuſes and grievances ſo deeply affecting Public Liberty, and ſo injurious

rious to the comfort and welfare of individuals, not a complaint, not a murmur was heard, and for many months all was ſilence and acquieſcence. By ſeceding from a Parliament ſo obſtinately deaf to every admonition, to every remonſtrance of prudence and patriotiſm, the true Friends of the Conſtitution had made the laſt pacific appeal to the People; but they had made it in vain: fruitleſs had been every exertion of private men to give efficacy to it by the interference of popular aſſemblies; and at laſt, they were compelled reluctantly to yield to the inſuperable difficulties oppoſed by the joint powers of corruption, deluſion, and intimidation; but they yielded without deſpairing of the final iſſue of the ſtruggle.

For the Addreſs of the Yorkſhire Gentlemen aſſembled at York on the 7th of February, 1798, ſee the 22d Preliminary Paper of the 5th Volume of P. P. for the Requiſition which was agreed to be ſigned by that Meeting, with the Liſt of Signatures annexed, ſee the firſt Preliminary Paper of this Volume.

NUMBER

NUMBER XV.

Containing Letters to the EDITOR *from ſeveral of his* Friends, *reſpecting the Safety of publiſhing his Pamphlet, vindicating the Seceſſion from Parliament in* 1798.

LETTER I.

From THOMAS BIGGE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BENTON, *Dec. 9th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

I SENT your packet yeſterday to Durham, and hope again to receive it from thence early in the week, when you may be aſſured I ſhall give it the moſt particular attention. In the mean-time, let me ſtate to you, that it occurred to me upon the peruſal of it, that the paſſage relative to the H. of L. was not *eſſential* to the point you were arguing, and that from prudential motives it had beſt be omitted. The late caſe of the Printer of the M. Chronicle, I am told was extremely hard. I never ſaw the offenſive paſſage; but ſome of my Correſpondents, at the time, ſpoke with indignation of the jealous, nay tyrannical conduct of that Corps. On this account, I ſuggeſt to you whether it would not

not be more adviſable to expunge than to modify the paſſage in queſtion. Having mentioned this point, there are one or two others upon which I will freely ſtate to you my opinion. You ſay in your laſt letter, "in times like theſe, ſomething muſt perhaps be hazarded (I mean in the lawful way) or elſe all will be ruined." To a general poſition of this kind, I have no heſitation in ſtating my concurrence. Nay I will even go farther, and ſay that there may be times in which ſome ſlight departure from the lawful courſe ought to be hazarded, or all would be loſt. But I cannot think that the preſent times call for either ſpecies of this political courage. Your poſition ſtates a motive for boldneſs. The *hope* of preventing ruin, of recovering what we poſſeſs, by recovering the ſafeguards we have loſt; theſe are, no doubt, good reaſons why a Lover of his Country ſhould in bad times diſregard perſonal danger; but can we ſeriouſly be actuated by that hope at preſent? Are we ſtronger in public opinion than we were twelve months ago? Is Miniſtry weaker? The reverſe I am perſuaded is the truth. The infamous conduct of our enemies, the ſuppreſſion of Iriſh inſurrection, our naval victories, our encreaſing and proſperous commerce, the influx of ſpecie, and the apparent improvement in our financial ſtate, have added conſiderably to the public confidence in Adminiſtration. And I really think that there is no meaſure of Requiſition, and no plan of hoſtilities which they may not carry into execution with the approbation of the Country.

This ſtate of popular infatuation ſeems to render it impoſſible to addreſs the Nation with any hopes of influencing their conduct. I cannot therefore diſcern any reaſon why a perſon who from his virtues, talents, and eſtimation, may hereafter be able to do important ſervice to the Cauſe of Liberty, ſhould run any riſque at the preſent inauſpicious moment, by a premature zeal for the intereſt of his degenerate Countrymen. If within a few years a chance ſhould offer itſelf to Engliſhmen of recovering their Conſtitution, it muſt be of the utmoſt importance to the ſucceſs of the great effort that Yorkſhire ſhould be able to call from his retreat, in health and vigour, her old and venerable Leader: and I truſt this conſideration will induce him to reflect upon the propriety of caution.

Little comfort I think is to be derived from Pitt's perſonal character. He has manifeſted ſuch a diſregard for human life, that the adverſary whom it is his intereſt to oppreſs, has little chance of ſafety *.

I much wiſh to hear Mr. E's opinion, which muſt reach you ſoon.

With beſt regards to all at Burton, believe me,

Dear Sir,
Your's ever ſincerely,
THOMAS BIGGE.

* The meaſure of ſeceding from Parliament had taken place not long before the end of the Seſſion, in the ſpring of the year 1798. To the Editor it appeared to be a meaſure, not only agreeable to the principles of the Conſtitution, but alſo prudent and well-timed. By the miſ-rule of a raſh and oppreſſive Adminiſtration, whether we regard their plan of foreign policy, or conſider the harſhneſs and rigour of their domeſtic Government, the Nation

LETTER II.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *Dec.* 10*th*, 1798.

My Dear Sir,

I RETURNED your manuſcript yeſterday to Mr. Bigge, from whom I received it on the preceding evening, having, during the time it remained in my hands, read it twice with conſiderable attention; and I now ſit down to give you my ſentiments on the queſtion of ſafety, in compliance with Mr. Bigge's, and from his letter, I ſuppoſe your requeſt. I muſt however firſt of all expreſs the extreme pleaſure which its peruſal has yielded me. The generous warmth with which you com-

 bat

tion was placed in a ſituation of extreme peril and diſcontent. To reſcue it from this dangerous and diſtracted ſtate, every effort of reaſon and eloquence had been exhauſted in Parliament by their opponents, but without ſucceſs. Parliament had ſhown itſelf obſtinately deaf to the wiſeſt counſels; and, not unfrequently, it had ſuffered thoſe counſels and their authors to be treated with an indignity which marked the extremity of prejudice, and the enormous influence of the Miniſter. Oppoſition there was evidently hopeleſs; and every effort which private men had made to aſſiſt the Friends of their Country, by Declarations from regular Meetings of the People, had been completely baffled. Seceſſion from Parliament was then the laſt pacific meaſure which remained to be tried; and if ever it can be juſtifiable, it muſt be ſo at a criſis deſperate as that. Before the end of the ſummer, however, it became dubious whether this powerful meaſure would produce the expected impreſſion on the Public, partly becauſe the number of the ſeceding members had been thinned by ſome once zealous followers of thoſe members who refuſed their concurrence, and perhaps then meditated that retreat from their party itſelf, which not long afterwards enſued; and alſo by others, truly honourable and conſtant friends of their party and their cauſe, who yet continued the formality of their attendance in Parliament, when hope was loſt, and the ſemblance

bat the enemies of Liberty, and ſupport it's able, though unfortunate Defenders in Parliament; the ſtrong and clear, though guarded language in which you expreſs yourſelf, and the new (as far as I know) and ſatisfactory point of view in which you place the Right of Seceſſion, have all afforded me great ſatisfaction. And if it were now ſufficient (as it once was) to guard againſt all intemperate appeals to the paſſions, and to recommend none but legal meaſures to procure redreſs, I could not for a moment heſitate in ſaying that you could run no riſque in publiſhing it. But how are we now to determine what it is ſafe to publiſh? By what ſtandard are we to judge of legality, when ſcraps of books are taken without their context, and the moſt diſtant parts of a publication are joined by the Crown's Advocate, and made *united* to convey meanings which neither of them ſeparately, and in the relations their Author had

ſemblance of deliberation alone remained: and partly alſo, from the diſapprobation of the meaſure by ſome of the trueſt Patriots out of Parliament. To the Editor it ſeemed a duty to ſtate to the Public what occurred to him upon the ſubject; about the end of autumn he had prepared his Piece, and on the 29th of November he ſent a MS. Copy of it to Mr. Erſkine, with a letter, requeſting his opinion as a Lawyer on the queſtion, whether the publication would or would not be conformable with law. From ſome accidental circumſtances, afterwards explained by Mr. Erſkine, his anſwer was delayed. Another MS. Copy was therefore tranſcribed, and ſent to his friends, T. Bigge, Eſq; of Benton, and J. R. Fenwick, Eſq; of Durham, with the Editor's requeſt that they would inform him what was their judgment on the queſtion of ſafety. Their anſwers are contained in the 1ſt and 2d letters of this Number, but his letters to them have not been preſerved. After he had received their very judicious and friendly anſwers, powerfully diſſuading him from the publication of his piece, on account of the danger of the times, the Editor received Mr. Erſkine's opinion that it would be agreeable to law to publiſh it, which put an end to his heſitation, and determined him to print it.

placed

placed them in, was capable of conveying? We once had preciſe and well-defined laws, which no informed man could offend againſt without his knowledge; but when the vague charge of tending to bring Government into contempt is ſufficient to eſtabliſh criminality, who can arraign the meaſures of Adminiſtration, or of any branch of the Legiſlature without peril? With a full view of this difficulty before me I read your pamphlet, and I endeavoured to judge it not with that liberal ſpirit which once directed the proceedings of our Courts of Juſtice, but with the captious and ſophiſtical temper which our laws have lately manifeſted, and our Crown Lawyers diſplayed in their pleadings. Even in this way of judging, I think you in general too guarded to afford them any hold of you, except they be allowed to explain the ſecond part by the firſt, and by that means to apply to the Parliament now ſitting, that reaſoning which you put hypothetically in the firſt part. They may reaſon thus. The Author allows that Seceſſion can only be juſtified by Parliament betraying its truſt, and that an incidental infraction of the Conſtitution, however great, cannot excuſe it; but he contends that Seceſſion is juſtifiable at preſent, therefore he aſſerts that Parliament *has betrayed its truſt*, that there is *no hope of redreſs from it*, that it is the *Treacherous* Garriſon, &c. &c. And he has by doing this ſought to bring a branch of the Legiſlature into contempt, as well as the Executive Government. Will they be allowed to reaſon thus? Would a Special Jury of the County of

York confirm ſuch reaſoning by their verdict? I dare not anſwer in the negative, though I think a London Jury would not. In this ſtate of mind I am anxious for Mr. Erſkine's advice; it is perhaps not eaſy for him to know what the Law is, but his comprehenſive mind muſt have ſeen into the line of proceeding which the Crown Law Officers have determined to purſue, and his penetration diſcovered the ſenſe in which Juries are inclined to underſtand our late captious and indefinite Laws. Until his opinion is received, I think it will be well to delay the publication, and ſhould you not ſoon receive it, perhaps it would be right to ſoften a few of the expreſſions, and to alter a paſſage or two where the application of the emergency deſcribed as rendering Seceſſion a duty is directly applied to the preſent moment. In the paper in which I encloſe this, you will find ſome trifling objections to particular expreſſions; among them, I will frankly own that the compliment you pay Mr. Pitt, p. 48, line 2d, is in my opinion of the moſt importance. I think it extremely ill founded, and capable of being turned by his ſupporters to the moſt dangerous purpoſes.

When we conſider the temper of the Nation at this moment, not yet cooled from the exultation of our naval ſucceſſes, and rather occupied than irritated by the new ſcheme of Taxation, perhaps there is little reaſon to object to the ſhort delay of publiſhing, which your waiting for Mr. Erſkine's opinion will occaſion. I do not think that the Miniſter has at any time been ſo ſtrong as he now is,

nor

nor the National Mind leſs open to the cool voice of Reaſon, or to thoſe generous energies which your pamphlet is calculated to awaken; but I will not again repeat the language of deſpondency, yet do not let us riſque a meaſure, without mature reflection, and the beſt advice, on which your perſonal ſafety and comforts, and your family's intereſt and happineſs ſo greatly depend.

Adieu, my dear Sir.—Mrs. Fenwick joins in beſt wiſhes to Mrs. Wyvill and your family. Health, Liberty, and Happineſs attend you.

J. R. FENWICK.

LETTER III.

From SAMUEL SHORE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

NORTON-HALL, *Feb. 8th*, 1799.

My Dear Sir,

WE all much rejoice to hear ſuch a good account of your health, and of that of your whole family, and I have the pleaſure to ſay my little grand-daughter continues to recover favourably. I think your advice to Lord Stanhope was very judicious, and am happy to find our ſentiments agree in regard to holding any Meetings at preſent. I ſincerely hope you may be right in your idea, that attention might now be paid to argument, and that it might produce beneficial effects, but I own I cannot be equally ſanguine. When I conſider how deeply the ſtrongeſt prejudices have

taken root, with what blind deference every ſcheme of the Miniſter is ſtill adopted here, and, from the influence he has obtained, what a dread is entertained in general of the moſt juſt and rational Reform, I cannot but be apprehenſive that the time is not yet arrived for the moſt convincing and beſt-formed arguments to have their due weight, or to produce any conſiderable effect.

Much as I ſhould rejoice to peruſe any thing from your pen on the ſubject you mention, and convinced as I am, that whatever you write will, from its ſtrength and juſtneſs, deſerve ſucceſs in every view, I feel it a duty of friendſhip to warn you to be careful. I thoroughly agree with you that ſome riſque may laudably be encountered when the probability of ſerving the Cauſe of our Country is ſtrong; but if this probability be ſmall and the riſque conſiderable, it becomes doubtful how far the attempt may be beneficial or otherwiſe. You ſhould conſider that the great guard of an Engliſhman's Liberty, in which he uſed to pride himſelf, is now ſuſpended without much revolting the public mind, and with the entire approbation of great numbers. Might not the Miniſter, under ſuch circumſtances, even clap you up in Priſon, with all your merit and reſpectability, and for writings, which in reality deſerved the praiſe of every true Friend to the genuine Freedom and Conſtitution of their Country, not only without general reprobation, but with extenſive popularity, and might keep you there, the martyr of ſuſpicion, without daring to bring you to a trial in the face of your Country.

Having ſaid what friendſhip and eſteem have dictated, I muſt add that whenever you deem it right to publiſh, I ſhall readily be of any ſervice in my power, though I cannot promiſe ſucceſs in my application, as you know I before failed in my endeavours to procure the inſertion of ſome things you wiſhed to have put into the Sheffield Paper. At Mancheſter I fear I have not now the means of applying I once had, owing to a diſaſtrous event I omitted to notice in my laſt. *

My wife and the family here unite in every good wiſh to yourſelf, Mrs. Wyvill, and your whole Fire Side, for the long enjoyment of every deſirable bleſſing, and protection from all real evil, with,

Dear Sir,

Your's moſt cordially,

SAMUEL SHORE.

* Although the Editor thought it right, after the prudent counſel ſo kindly preſſed upon him by Mr. Shore, as it before had been preſſed by Mr. Bigge and Dr. Fenwick, to face the danger which ſtill might be thought to attend the publication of the paper in queſtion, he yet felt with the utmoſt gratitude their kind anxiety for his ſafety: and though his ideas of duty forbad him to ſuppreſs his piece, when he no longer could doubt its legality, he owns with pleaſure, that the admonitions of his three friends muſt have decided his reſolution againſt publication, if the queſtion of legality had not been anſwered by Mr. Erſkine.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

From HENRY PIERSE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

My Dear Sir,

I HAVE conſidered the latter part of your letter, and you will permit me to ſay, that, in theſe times, every prudent caution is neceſſary, before you ſend your publication into the world. The recent Debates in the Houſe will furniſh you with a proof how eager and happy Adminiſtration will be to ſeize an opportunity to attack you, obnoxious as you muſt be to them, for the upright and manly conduct you have purſued; and though I am ſure your mind is uninfluenced by Terror, yet I do think it will be proper for you to weigh well the advantages of a publication of the nature you intend, againſt Perſonal riſque, in times when argument can be of little ſervice. Excuſe my ſaying ſo much upon the ſubject. Impute it to the friendſhip and reſpect I feel for you. *

We deſire our beſt compliments to Mrs. Wyvill and your family; and believe that I am

Ever your's ſincerely,

H. PIERSE.

Dec. 5th, 1799.

* After about 2000 copies of the pamphlet in queſtion had been circulated by the help of friends, the Editor conceived it might be publiſhed in the uſual way; and he conſulted Mr. Pierſe upon the ſubject. But his judicious anſwer determined him to abandon the idea. For Mr. Pierſe's kind advice upon the occaſion, he was greatly indebted; by his conſent that the ſervice he had done him ſhould be thus made known, a freſh favour has been conferred upon him; and he requeſts his worthy friend to accept the ſincere expreſſion of his gratitude.

NUMBER XVI.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with the* Rev. Dr. Diſney *and* Mr. Debrett, *reſpecting the Publication of his Pamphlet on "Seceſſion."*

LETTER I.

From the Rev. Dr. DISNEY *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Mr. DEBRETT's SHOP,
Feb. 16th, 1799.—Two o'clock.

My Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED your letter this forenoon, and inſtantly repaired hither. Your firſt remittance of your pamphlet is not yet received, and all I can further ſay at preſent is, that Mr. D. will ſend out the copies for your friends, and deliberate and adviſe about its publication. I am however inclined to think that if he ſhould refuſe to publiſh, it will be in vain to look out for any other reputable Bookſeller. Major Cartwright could not find a Publiſher for his Tract on Standing Armies. Mr. Dyer cannot find one for his on Libels. The Liberty of the Preſs is at an end. Probably, therefore, the only way will be to diſtribute copies among your friends. Should indeed

indeed Mr. D. be adviſed not to publiſh, I know not how one could ſollcit a leſs cautious man to undertake it. But enough for the preſent. Let me hear from you again. I had already heard of your work.

With very beſt compliments to Mrs. Wyvill,

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Moſt ſincerely your's,

JOHN DISNEY.

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* Rev. Dr. DISNEY.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 18*th*, 1799.

My Dear Sir,

IF Mr. Debrett ſhould decline to publiſh, this might be ſaid to a leſs cautious Bookſeller, viz. that the pamphlet has been ſeen by a Lawyer of high reputation, whom I conſulted on the point of legality; and that in his opinion, it is written in a manner that is conformable with law; and in conſequence of this opinion, I am deſirous to publiſh, and not afraid to ſtand the conſequences that may reſult from the publication. My name will appear on the Title Page, as well as that of the Publiſher. But if no reputable Bookſeller dares to publiſh, notwithſtanding the aſſurance of legality received from the eminent Lawyer alluded to, I muſt be content to circulate my pamphlet as well as I can, &c.

I am, Dear Sir, &c.

C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. Dr. DISNEY *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Tuesday Night, Feb. 19th, 1799.
SLOANE STREET.

Dear Sir,

I Have this day ſeen Mr. Debrett, and he finally declines publiſhing the "Seceſſion Vindicated," but will ſend out all the copies for Gentlemen, agreeably to your direction. He had particularly marked part of p. 27 and 28, and p. 33. I have received a dozen copies, and ſent one to the Duke of Grafton yeſterday evening; and as I engaged to write to you, Debrett ſaid he ſhould decline it. Thus circumſtanced, I do not ſee what can be done more than may be effected by private circulation. It is in vain to ſeek for a reſpectable Publiſher, and would be wrong to involve an unwary man. Mr. Wakefield's Trial comes on in the King's Bench on Thurſday morning. I ſhall be impatient to receive your anſwer to theſe untoward circumſtances, but remember your own ſecurity is attained by the neceſſary prudence of the craft; and the times do not yet demand the ſacrifice of individual and voluntary virtue. Mr. F. Palmer's letter I gave to Sir J. Bankes, and he has earneſtly ſolicited liberty to communicate it to Government; I have given him that liberty upon preliminary ſtipulations on the part of the Writer.

With

With our joint compliments to Mrs. Wyvill and yourſelf,

I am, Dear Sir, in much haſte,
Very ſincerely your's,
JOHN DISNEY.

P. S. Holt, the Bookſeller, died laſt month, in conſequence of his long impriſonment.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. Dr. DISNEY *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

SLOANE-STREET, *Monday Night, Feb.* 25, 1799.

Dear Sir,

I Feel myſelf much relieved on your account, that you have determined to forbear the publication of your pamphlet. All your ſpecific directions I delivered to Debrett this morning on the receipt of your letter of the 23d; and be aſſured that they will be attended to. I cannot at this inſtant ſay any thing about what number will be wanted. Since I wrote laſt to you, I find from Mr.——, that *legal* opinions differ upon the ſubject of the ſecurity of your Tract. The language of Lord K. and the Attorney General, and the Jury diſregarding the intention, the quo-animo, with which the Author writes, or Publiſher ſells, in the very recent Trial of Mr. Wakefield, render Mr. Fox's Libel Bill a mere nullity; and the laſt Sedition Act allows ſuch a latitude of interpretation, that the very writing the name of william pitt in ſmall characters,

characters, may be conſtrued into Sedition, unleſs confined to a confidential letter under ſeal. The diſſatisfaction of the Minority begins to diſpoſe ſeveral of them to think of aſking for the Place of Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds. *

I cannot ſay more at preſent; but believe me to remain, Dear Sir,

Very ſincerely your's,

JOHN DISNEY.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* Mr. DEBRETT.

BURTON-HALL, *May 29th*, 1799.

Sir,

I Find it is the general opinion in this County, and in Durham and Northumberland, that the pamphlet on Seceſſion contains nothing which is in a legal view juſtly exception-

* The Editor returns his thanks moſt cordially to his excellent friend, Dr. Diſney, for his kind permiſſion that this and the two preceding letters in this Number might be publiſhed. It was his earneſt wiſh to obtain that permiſſion, becauſe they afford an inconteſtable proof how much the Bookſellers were intimidated, and how completely the Freedom of the Preſs had been deſtroyed about this time by judicial rigour, and the baſe ſervility of Juries. He alſo wiſhed to preſerve this memorial of the friendſhip which for more than 30 years has ſubſiſted between Dr. Diſney and himſelf, and to obtain ſo proper an opportunity to expreſs his gratitude to his friend, and his high ſenſe of a character reſpectable for talents, for honeſt zeal and intrepidity, and venerable for long conſiſtency of conduct, in promoting Rational Religion, and the joint Cauſe of Civil and Religious Liberty, ſtrictly moral, without Stoical auſterity; and uniting to ſuavity of manners that warmth of feeling, without which no one has ever attained the height of patriotic virtue, or even the generoſity of true friendſhip.

able.

able. If you are encouraged by a ſimilar opinion in London to think you might with ſafety become the Publiſher of a Third Edition, I certainly ſhall have no objection, and will concert with you, and with ſome friends in Town, the means of getting it ſpeedily and correctly printed in London. I am far from wiſhing to preſs you upon this ſubject; I am aware that circumſtances render great caution neceſſary; yet conſidering myſelf to be well ſupported by public opinion, as I alſo am by that of *ſeveral Lawyers of great eminence* *, I ſhould be glad to publiſh the pamphlet in queſtion in the uſual way. I am ready to bring a Third Edition forward, whenever you, or any other Bookſeller in London of ſimilar reſpectability will engage to be the Publiſher. I ſhall only add, that I ſhall not apply to any other Bookſeller at preſent.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient,
humble ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

* The Honourable Thomas Erſkine was the only Lawyer whom the Editor conſulted concerning the legality and ſafety of publiſhing the pamphlet on Seceſſion, while it remained in manuſcript. After it had been diſtributed, to a conſiderable extent, in print, he could with truth aſſure Mr. Debrett, that ſeveral Lawyers had concurred in the opinion which Mr. Erſkine had previouſly tranſmitted to him. But it is needleſs now to name them.

NUMBER XVII.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence on his Pamphlet, vindicating the Seceſſion after publication.*

LETTER I.

From the Rev. Dr. DISNEY *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

SLOANE-STREET, *Monday, Feb.* 18*th*, 1799.

My Dear Sir,

ON Saturday evening Mr. Debrett ſent me half a dozen copies of the "Seceſſion Vindicated." I read it over that evening. I muſt confeſs that I differ from you upon the Seceſſion ſingly; and I will be ſo explicit as to add, that I remain unconvinced. When the Crown appeals to the People againſt the exiſting Legiſlature, he deſtroys their function, and others take their place, or the old Members are *regenerated* by a new Election. But the Seceſſion of the Minority is an appeal to themſelves, neglecting their function, but keeping their Seats. Their appeal ſhould be to the Chiltern Hundreds, or they are like the

dog in the manger, or reſtive horſes in a carriage. Indeed, I do not ſee how Seceſſion can depend upon the diſcretion of the Repreſentative. He is ſent to Parliament, at the moſt, with a diſcretion to determine his voice, yea or nay; but abſence appears to exceed his delegated truſt, or to betray it. We muſt put all calculation of conſequences out of the queſtion; his buſineſs, as an agent or deputy, is to be at his poſt. Members are ſent to Parliament to uſe their wit and cunning in legiſlation, not optionally to abſent themſelves from diſcuſſion and deliberation. But enough. I had much converſation on Saturday with Sir C. Wray and Mr. B. Hollis concerning your publication. I do not, indeed, ſee any juſt cauſe for apprehenſion, and I like the reſt of your Tract very much; but the words of the laſt Sedition Act are very comprehenſive, and to reprove the haughty dictator may be to bring his Majeſty's Government into contempt. If Debrett ſhould decline, *do not publiſh* in the ordinary way. At preſent, let the publication depend upon his determination.

I have only time and room to ſubſcribe myſelf,

My Dear Sir,
moſt ſincerely your's,
J. D.*

* The acute and ſagacious mind of Dr. Diſney has ſeized the objections which are capable of being urged with the greateſt effect againſt the meaſure of Seceſſion from Parliament, and has compriſed them within the narrow compaſs of a few ſentences in this letter. The ſentiments of Dr. Diſney are corroborated by the opinion of other valuable Correſpondents exhibited in this Number. The letters containing theſe objections are produced, not with a view to any farther argument on the ſubject, but from an impartial wiſh to lay before the reader what had been ſaid by ſome of

LETTER II.

From CAPEL LOFFT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

I Believe I am to thank you for the Seceſſion Vindicated. I cannot ſay it has overcome my objections to that expedient; but I can ſay it adds greatly to the reſpect I have many years felt, and I aſſure myſelf I ſhall always feel towards the author.

I wrote two letters againſt the Union of Ireland under our Legiſlature and Government. They have been inſerted under the ſignature I uſed during the American War. They have been publiſhed in the Morning Chronicle. I conſider that meaſure as the ſtrongeſt that could perhaps have been taken in its own nature, its timing and circumſtances, towards depriving both Countries of their little remains of hope.

I remain, Dear Sir,

With great reſpect and eſteem,

Your's very ſincerely,

CAPEL LOFFT.

TROSTON, *Feb.* 27, 1799.

P. S. I ſhould grieve for the death of Mr. Grigby, if it were not perhaps better for a Lover of his Country and of human happineſs to be taken out of theſe times than to be left.

of the ſincereſt Friends of Liberty, with greateſt force of reaſon againſt the Paper on Seceſſion; ſo that by comparing their objections with the reaſoning of the Paper itſelf, which may be found at the end of this Volume, the reader may be enabled to decide, with ſatisfaction to himſelf, the queſtion whether Seceſſion in certain caſes be or be not admiſſible on the principles of the Conſtitution.

LETTER III.

From LORD ROKEBY *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

HORTON, *near* HYTHE, 3*d March*, 1799.

Rev. Sir,

I Have received, and have attentively read, and I return you many thanks for your very excellent publication of the Seceſſion Vindicated. I moſt earneſtly wiſh that I could likewiſe ſignify my ſatisfaction ariſing from the hopes and expectation that the wiſe, prudent, and honeſt counſels contained in it will be adopted, purſued, and carried into execution: The proſpect on that ſide, however, appears very unpromiſing. A moſt black and threatening cloud ſeems to hang over us, which, it is to be feared, will one day burſt upon our heads.

I heartily hope, however, that all ſuch apprehenſions or imaginations may upon experience prove totally miſtaken and groundleſs, or at leaſt may ſoon paſs away, and that you may for many happy years enjoy the peace and proſperity of our Country, as well as the remembrance of your own endeavours to preſerve and obtain thoſe ineſtimable objects. For my part, I am at my time of day little likely to partake perſonally of ſuch events or circumſtances.

I take the liberty, however, to ſend you, as a ſmall teſtimony of my remaining principles and opinions, my anſwer to a letter (apparently a circular one) from Lord ——

together

together with a copy of his Lordſhip's letter to me. I have not printed his name nor letter, not having his Lordſhip's warrant, altho' his name has been publiſhed without any authority from me; but I have not the leaſt ſcruple in communicating to you his letter, that the matter may be the better underſtood. I wiſh you your health, and am, Sir,

With the moſt ſincere eſteem and reſpect,
Your very faithful and obedient ſervant,
ROKEBY.*

P. S. Give me leave to beg the favour of a ſhort line ſignifying the receipt of this letter, for I am in ſome doubt whether I have your right direction.

(COPY.)

DUBLIN CASTLE, *Jan.* 11*th*, 1799.

My Lord,

IT being the intention of his Majeſty's Miniſters to ſubmit to the conſideration of the Parliament of both Kingdoms, the meaſure of a Legiſlative Union, as the only means of ſtrengthening and ſecuring the connection between them; and as this moſt important queſtion will be brought forward at the opening

* At this diſtance of time, after the death of his venerable Correſpondent, and after the honoured name which he mentioned in the preceding letter had been publiſhed by ſome other perſon, the Editor at firſt conceived it could not be deemed improper to publiſh the circular letter here alluded to by Lord Rokeby with the ſignature annexed, together with his Lordſhip's anſwer, taken from the Paper communicated to the Editor; eſpecially as that letter appears to be unexceptionable. On farther conſideration, however, he has thought it right to ſuppreſs the name in the circular letter, which is here given with Lord Rokeby's anſwer.

of the Seſſion, I ſhould be glad to have as early an opportunity as your Lordſhip can afford me of communicating with you upon it; and I flatter myſelf that from the liberality and fairneſs of the terms to be offered, and the importance of the meaſure to the tranquillity and ſecurity of this Kingdom, it will meet with your Lordſhip's approbation, and receive your ſupport.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient,
humble ſervant,

Right Honourable Lord Rokeby. (Signed)

Anſwer *to an* Application *concerning a* Legiſlative Union *between* Great Britain *and* Ireland.

Horton, *near* Hythe, Kent, *22d Jan.* 1799.

My Lord,

I HOLD myſelf highly honoured by the application expreſſed to me in your Lordſhip's letter of the 11th inſtant, and the more ſo, as I am fully confident that your Lordſhip expects or deſires from me no other than a plain and ſincere anſwer to it.

Give me leave to ſay then, that conſidering as I do, a Peerage of Ireland to be conferred and accepted, as a great and almoſt ſacred truſt for the good, benefit, and advantage of the Iriſh Nation, and to be ſo executed, I cannot give my conſent and concurrence to remove

move from their Country their own Legiſlature by a Legiſlative Union with Great Britain. I ſpeak this as being my public duty towards the People of Ireland.

As a Briton and Engliſhman, I cannot but frequently and feelingly reflect how very different the ſtate of Ireland was about four or five years ago from what it has been ſince, although it is beyond doubt exceedingly bettered by the wiſe, mild, and benevolent Government of your Lordſhip. Surely then it much behoves ſome men well and ſeriouſly to revolve within themſelves, what and whoſe counſels and ſyſtem they have been, that have thus brought the Iriſh Nation to their preſent diſpoſition and ſituation, from the temper and attachment to us, which ſo generally and warmly prevailed with them no longer ago than in the time of Lord Fitzwilliam. What a change! Are not ſuch ways of proceeding and governing the doing ourſelves the work of our enemies?

It is therefore moſt earneſtly to be deſired, that our reſponſible Stateſmen and Miniſters will duly and deeply conſider whether the ſtep propoſed is more likely to reconcile really our Siſter Kingdom to England, or ultimately to exaſperate and inveterate it in a greater degree againſt us, before they proceed in ſo extremely important, or, perhaps, almoſt deſperate a meaſure.

Whether this diſtant and remote Parliamentary Election may not by an addition to the power and influence of the Crown affect likewiſe our Conſtitution at home, and

whether no ſuch event has by a ſimilar circumſtance even already taken place in our own Iſland, may perhaps be too tender a point for me to enter into.

Such are, however, the humble, but ſincere ſentiments of an old man nearer to ninety than to eighty years of age: I hope and truſt, that your Lordſhip will be pleaſed to accept them in good part, as a reſpectful, although plain anſwer on the ſubject of the application made by your Lordſhip to me *.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord, &c.

ROKEBY.

LETTER IV.

From Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart. *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MANY thanks to you, my Dear Sir, for the pleaſure you have given me in the peruſal of your Seceſſion Vindicated. Your truths coucerning Mr. Pitt cannot be in any wiſe denied, nor your arguments or facts controverted. You will excuſe me, though, if acting on them, Iſhould rather have drawn a different concluſion, and vacated my Seat inſtead of Seceding.

We find ourſelves in a very awful criſis.—Every thing to be dreaded from a daring and inſolent Miniſter. A corrupt and timid Repreſentation, a People ſunk in the moſt abject

* This letter is here printed as it was ſent to the Editor by Lord Rokeby: that is, as it had been printed in the Kentiſh Gazette.

apathy,

apathy, our Conſtitution annihilated, and martial law ready to take its place; and in ſhort ſuch a combination of political evils as hiſtory has ſeldom recorded.

The few that think with you and me dare ſcarcely open their mouths in company:—The Miniſter has ſo *bothered* the Nation with victories, (almoſt uſeleſs) and ruinous defeats, that it is almoſt called treaſon to queſtion any meaſure, however abſurd.—The moſt favourable treatment of us, is giving us only the denomination of Jacobins. Believe me

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

CECIL WRAY.*

PALL-MALL, *6th March*, 1799.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart.

March 10th, 1799.

My Dear Sir,

FEARING ſome expreſſions in my letter of yeſterday may not have been ſufficiently clear, I beg to trouble you with a few lines to-day, merely to correct and amend them. I certainly retain exactly the ſame opinions as I have advanced

* The Editor, with every other well-wiſher to Public Liberty, has heard with ſorrow, the unexpected intelligence of the death of this valuable man, the friend of Sir George Savile, and of his worthy Colleague, Henry Duncombe, Eſq; and like them, intitled to the praiſe of uniform and diſintereſted patriotiſm. His letters of a recent date to the Editor, expreſs the ſincerity of his regard as a private friend, and as a public man they prove his perſevering zeal and conſiſtency to the laſt. The Editor reflects with a melancholy, but heart-felt pleaſure, that he poſſeſſed his confidence and friendſhip without interruption, and with a ſingular concurrence of ſentiment thro' all the viciſſitudes and variations of opinion which the ſtrange events of 25 years have produced in the

advanced in my Pamphlet. But when I find you, Mr. Martin, Mr. C. Lofft, and Dr. Diſney not convinced by my reaſoning, I naturally feel a degree of diffidence, though I do not perceive my error. I ſay to myſelf, if I have not ſatisfied ſuch ſincere Patriots and true Lovers of the Conſtitution, that Seceſſion in the exiſting circumſtances is right, I have been too ſanguine in my hopes, and muſt not expect that my performance will do much good, at leaſt reſpecting that point which is its immediate object. Yet in other reſpects, I hope it has a better chance of making an impreſſion, where it may be read, notwithſtanding its non-publication in the uſual way; becauſe I have the ſatisfaction to find that in the reſpects alluded to, my piece is approved, not only by yourſelf and the other real friends of their Country, whom I have named, but alſo, pretty generally by thoſe who are candid and independent men. On this account, and becauſe it may ſerve to ſhow the lamentable ſtate to which the Preſs is reduced, I think it may be uſeful to circulate this paper, and have taken the liberty to ſend you ſome copies of it. I flatter myſelf I have not treſpaſſed too much on your friendly indulgence.

I am, Dear Sir,

With the moſt cordial eſteem,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

the preſent reign. Inſtead of the pleaſing office to tender his thanks and gratitude to his excellent friend for the kindneſs of his laſt letter, and his conſent to the publication of *this*, &c. the Editor is now called to perform the laſt duty of friendſhip by bearing his teſtimony to departed worth, and to offer here the tribute of his praiſe to the character of this unblemiſhed Patriot.

Jan. 19*th*, 1805.

LETTER VI.

From CAPEL LOFFT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

I Certainly do think very highly of the ſentiment and ſpirit of the Seceſſion Vindicated, and very much like the ſtyle and manner, though I ſtill doubt whether a Seceſſion from Parliament ought to be made, unleſs when it is time to declare that the Conſtitution is diſſolved.

I can do nothing I doubt at Norwich, and but very little I am afraid at Ipſwich. Nothing can more ſtrongly ſhow the ſtate of the Preſs than that Bookſellers ſhould decline this publication with the name of its author.

If I am favoured with 20 or 25, perhaps I may have ſome ſucceſs in circulating them in Bury and this neighbourhood.

It is certainly, as you obſerve, leſs afflictive to loſe a friend by death than by deſertion of political ſentiment, and a change to a conduct adverſe to Freedom and the Conſtitution, and the Rights and Intereſts of Human Society.

But I the more grieve for Mr. Grigby, as there was no fear that the Public would loſe him, unleſs by death. I believe I might ſay no more than there is of their loſing you.

Mr. Lloyd, I underſtand, is gone to Maidſtone Aſſizes as a Witneſs on Subpæna, on occaſion

caſion of the letter of Mr. Arthur Young, Jun.

I remain, Dear Sir,
With great eſteem,
Your's, very ſincerely,
CAPEL LOFFT. *

TROSTON, *11th March*, 1799.

LETTER VII.

From Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart. *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

YOUR firſt conveyed to me the exact ideas which your ſecond has done; nor do I think that the difference of our ſentiments in the exiſting circumſtances of the Kingdom is of any the leaſt conſequence. Had, indeed, a Reform of Parliament taken place, and the Repreſentation been what it ought, a Seceſſion on our principles might have had the very beſt effects, both in arouſing the People from their apathy, and the Houſe from its ſervility. The Independent Conſtitution of our neighbours in Ireland is, I doubt, on the balance: I hear from Ireland that the patriotiſm of the oppoſers of the Union evaporates daily. By the bye, I much doubt their patriotiſm, and rather aſcribe their votes on that occaſion to ſelfiſh motives of Borough Intereſt than to ought elſe. When their Liberty is gone, ours muſt fall. Mrs.

* A Copy of the Editor's letter, to which this by Mr. Capel Lofft is an anſwer, has not been preſerved.

Mrs. Jebb to-day told me that ſhe began to regard Pitt as an *heaven-born Miniſter*, an inſtrument in the hands of Providence, to bring about (unwillingly, it is true) Reform and Conſtitutional Happineſs. Our worſt ſymptom at preſent is apathy. Rich men muſt be ſlaves.—When Pitt has ſufficiently ſequeſtered our riches we may come to our ſenſes.

Believe me

Your's, ſincerely,

CECIL WRAY *.

* The ſentiments of this letter, in the Editor's judgment, are worthy of this judicious Patriot—now no more; and, in the main, they agree with the argument of the paper on Seceſſion: in ſome reſpects of no great importance there may be ſome variation. It is needleſs to examine the difference; but it is not altogether ſuperfluous to obſerve, that the Right of Reſignation is not veſted by the Conſtitution in a Member of the Houſe of Commons. He may, indeed, accept the office of Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds, and ſo vacate his ſeat in Parliament, if the Crown chuſes to confer it upon him; but he cannot demand an appointment to that, or any other office, as his right, and he poſſeſſes no other regular means of ſurrendering his deputed truſt. In theſe reſpects, therefore, Seceſſion appears preferable to this precarious mode of retirement from Parliament; becauſe the Crown, though it may refuſe the Chiltern Hundreds, cannot reſtrain Seceſſion, and becauſe, after the Member has attended the call of the Houſe, and the conſent of his Conſtituents has been obtained, he may decide, at his diſcretion, whether he ſhould, or ſhould not ſecede.

It is poſſible that the country may again approach that ſtate of diſcontent and diſtraction, in which Revolution may appear nearly unavoidable. It ſeems highly deſirable, therefore, that in ſuch extreme caſes the means to prevent a diſſolution of Government, and a recurrence to force ſhould be found in the principles of the Conſtitution. If Seceſſion, on emergencies of great extremity, may render that terrible remedy unneceſſary, it ſhould, if it does not already form a part of the Conſtitution. But whether it be, or be not a meaſure ſtrictly juſtifiable upon conſtitutional principles, is not a queſtion to be here debated afreſh. It is ſufficient to refer the Reader to the Appendix of this volume, that he may compare the reaſoning of that paper with the objections contained in ſeveral of the preceding letters.

But another queſtion there is which may deſerve farther conſideration. Seceſſion from Parliament may be granted to be a juſtifiable

LETTER VIII.

From LORD ROKEBY *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

HOATON, *near* FYTHE, *Kent*,
18th March, 1799.

Rev. Sir,

I Have received your favour of the 10th inſtant, as likewiſe ſix copies of the Seceſſion Vindicated: I ſhall with great pleaſure diſtribute them. I moſt heartily wiſh that they may make the impreſſion and produce the effect which right reaſon and the public good require that they ſhould.

I ſhould have been ſtrangely ſurpriſed at what you mention concerning the Bookſellers of

juſtifiable meaſure, but it may be repreſented as a feeble and inefficient meaſure, from which in caſes, ſuch as thoſe already deſcribed, no benefit to the community can reaſonably be expected. And the late Seceſſion may be alleged as an example which ſufficiently proves its inefficacy, and ſtrongly forbids any future experiment of the ſame kind. That the failure of this laſt inſtance of Seceſſion has been complete in one reſpect, and that by no means unimportant, cannot be denied: it has failed, in the ſlighteſt ſenſible degree, to accelerate the elevation of the Seceding Members to power. Their diſappointment *as candidates for power* the Editor laments. If the door of the Cabinet had been thrown open to them, in conſequence of the impreſſion which their retirement from Parliament had made upon the public mind, he ſincerely believes that they would have made a wiſe and generous uſe of their power; that they would have rendered our national liberty more ſecure, becauſe, in that caſe, the ability would have been added to their undoubted wiſh to ſecure it.

And yet in another view of the meaſure and its conſequences, and that a view of the greateſt importance, the late Seceſſion appears to have produced effects highly beneficial to the public. As *candidates for power*, the Seceders failed; as *Patriots ſtruggling* to avert great impending calamities, they certainly were in ſome degree ſucceſsful. For it may be obſerved, that a change in the Cabinet was effected, and more moderate councils took place, that peace was made with France, and the oppreſſive laws paſſed by the influence of the preceding Miniſtry were ſuffered to expire,

of London, York, and Newcaſtle, if I had not before made up my mind about the ſtate of the times; but ſuch circumſtances are certainly the very object meant and aimed at by ſome late proſecutions. Some men ſeem determined to attempt and hazard every thing in ſupport of their own power. Whither do all theſe things lead? It is amazing even to conſider or gueſs what will be the end and winding up of the whole, although ſome end there muſt certainly one day be.

I wiſh you health,
and am, with ſincere reſpect,
your very obedient,
and faithful ſervant,
ROKEBY.

expire, at no very diſtant period after the Seceſſion. To what are thoſe happy changes to be aſcribed, not wholly, but yet in a very conſiderable degree? No doubt they may juſtly be aſcribed in part to the determined reſolution which the Seceders had manifeſted to reſiſt oppreſſion, and to ſupport the rights of the community to the utmoſt of their power. They had failed indeed to rouze the Parliament from its ſervility; they had appealed in vain to the people; for a conſiderable time the majority of the nation continued ſtill ſunk in apathy. But in the year 1800, it became evident that the Seceders had gained ſtrength; at an early period in the following year diſtreſs and danger had gathered round us, and had wrought for them in a more ſenſible degree a change in the public opinion; at laſt, in the Spring of 1801, they were on the point of being placed at the head of a Body of Petitioners more numerous than that by which Lord North had been diſplaced, and peace had been obtained with America. Under theſe circumſtances the Seceded Leaders became formidable to the retainers of the Court; to preveut their introduction to power, in conſequence of the increaſing diſcontent, and to ſecure the undue influence of the Crown from any danger of diminution by Reform, a partial change of men and meaſures became neceſſary: And thus the intereſted views of his Courtiers, combined with the humanity and benevolence of the Prince, to put an end, for a time, to the ſyſtem of war and internal coercion, which had ſo nearly led the Nation to the moſt fatal extremities. In this view, therefore, the late Seceſſion was attended with ſucceſs, and the benefits which were thus obtained for the Community, ſurpaſs all calculation.

LETTER IX.

From General JOHN HALE *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

THE PLANTATION, *March 20th*, 1799.

My Dear Sir,

I Thank you for the Pamphlet which I have received from York. You have ſhown yourſelf an able advocate for the Seceders, and a ſtrenuous opponent of thoſe who differ from them in opinion; but I queſtion whether Mr. Pitt and his friends will admit that they have been actuated by thoſe motives you impute to them in the proſecution of their meaſures; be that as it may, your endeavours are laudable for the attainment of Peace and the preſervation of Liberty.

I remain, always,
With great regard,
My Dear Sir,
Your faithful,
humble ſervant,
JOHN HALE.

LETTER X.

From SAMUEL SHORE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

NORTON-HALL, *March 20th*, 1799.

My Dear Sir,

I Approve very much the ſentiments in your Pamphlet throughout, and alſo the argument, which I think ingenious and more ſatisfactory

tisfactory to me than any I had before ſeen; for I had my doubts on the meaſure of Seceſſion. Strange are the times indeed, in which ſuch a Pamphlet cannot find a reſpectable Publiſher!

I write a few lines in haſte, to ſay I am quite unconnected with Huddersfield and Saddleworth, but will take care of the other places, and alſo of the remainder of Derbyſhire, as Cheſterfield and Bakewell, &c. I dare ſay the number you mention will be an ample ſupply, or ſome leſs, if you ſend by other means to the two places I have mentioned, as having no connection with them. The two copies ſent before only reached us a ſhort time ago, which my Son took with him to the Aſſizes at Derby, as we had already received one from Mr. Lindſey.

Our beſt remembrances attend Mrs. Wyvill and all at Burton; and believe me ever,

Dear Sir,

Very cordially your's,

SAM. SHORE.

LETTER XI.

From the Rev. WILLIAM WOOD *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LEEDS, *April 4th*, 1799.

I Return you my ſincere thanks for your excellent defence of the preſent Seceſſion from Parliament, ſix copies of which I received by the York Coach. I have diſtributed five copies among ſuch friends as I thought

moſt likely to lend them to others, that the ſentiments addreſſed by you to the Public at this momentous criſis, may have as wide a circulation as poſſible. In former times, I ſhould have ſaid with confidence, that ſuch a publication muſt do much good. But, at preſent, I freely acknowledge I have little hope. Such a general ſtupor prevails among all ranks of men, undiſturbed by ſtimuli which would formerly have goaded them almoſt to madneſs, that I fear nothing is to be expected ſhort of political death, and that we are declining faſt to what Mr. Hume ſome where calls the true Euthanaſia of the Britiſh Conſtitution. It ſeems to be almoſt the univerſal opinion that peace is not to be had upon any terms, and that war, however ruinous, muſt be ſubmitted to with patience as an evil without remedy. Such is the dread of being branded with diſaffection and Jacobiniſm, that the moſt enlightend and honeſt Friends to their King and Country dare not venture to propoſe even a reſpectful Petition to the Throne either to diſmiſs the preſent Miniſtry, or to command them to make ſuch fair and open overtures as may lead to the termination of hoſtilities, or leave the French Directory without excuſe. The Landed Intereſt, who muſt ſurely be immediately affected, are aſleep, and the Commercial World is too much employed in preſent ſpeculations for profit to think of their Country, or of diſtant conſequences to themſelves.

From the concluſion of your Pamphlet I am led to fear that your health has ſuffered by the late

late ſevere Winter; but I hope it has not been materially affected. As to myſelf, I have undergone nearly a ſix months confinement. A ſevere Rheumatiſm, to me a new complaint, afflicted me much in the Autumn. My old enemy, the Gout, attacked me when I was ſcarcely able to grapple with the former diſorder, and their united force compleatly laid me up, confined me to my bed a fortnight, to my chamber a month, and I am now in rather a crippled ſtate. I look forward with impatience to the ſeaſon when I may try the effect either of Buxton or Bath. I hope to have a better account of you and your's, and remain,

With hearty reſpect, Dear Sir,

Ever your's,

W. WOOD.*

* This reſpectable Diſſenting Miniſter ſucceeded Dr. Prieſtley in the Paſtoral Office at Leeds about the year 1773; and though ſurrounded there by men zealous for all the peculiarities of the Eſtabliſhed Church, as Dr. Prieſtley alſo found himſelf on his removal to Birmingham, yet by prudence and a natural ſuavity of manners, Mr. Wood was able in a great meaſure to conciliate the good will and eſteem of thoſe who differed ſo widely from him in religious opinion: and during thoſe times of irritation, in which the exemplary Champion of a rational mode of religion at Birmingham nearly fell a ſacrifice to the rage of his Adverſaries, the mild and cautious character of his Succeſſor at Leeds, though profeſſing ſimilar principles, ſo far ſubdued the animoſity of his opponents, that he ſuffered from them no perſonal moleſtation.

It is part of the praiſe alſo which juſtly belongs to Mr. Wood, that he ſtands among the foremoſt of our Proteſtant Diſſenters who have recommended or adopted a Liturgy wholly freed from the impure allay of controverſial matter mixed with the expreſſions of Chriſtian piety and benevolence. On theſe principles, which are thoſe of Locke, and Clarke, and Newton, the Liturgy of the Church of England had been before improved by the venerable Lindſey, and his worthy Succeſſor, Dr. Diſney, for the uſe of their Congregation in Eſſex-Street. In their form of ſocial worſhip, the Chriſtian will find his peculiarities of opinion neither aſſerted nor condemned; but if he be humble, benevolent, and pious, he will be well ſatisfied to find there whatever can conduce to the better purpoſe of an increaſe of his pious, benevolent, and humble

LETTER XII.

From THOMAS WALKER, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MANCHESTER, *30th of April*, 1799.

Dear Sir,

I Have many obligations to you for the publications you have at various times been ſo kind as to ſend me; but there is none upon which I ſet a higher value than the "Defence of Seceſſion," which I received a ſhort time ago. The peruſal has given me a melancholy pleaſure; for while it excites painful ſenſations that the ſituation of the Country ſhould make ſuch a publication neceſſary, it is a very great alleviation of thoſe ſenſations that, in times like the preſent, there is a man who has intrepidity enough to expreſs himſelf in the ho-

ble diſpoſition. In our excellent Liturgy, thus freed from controverſial matter, there is a noble ſimplicity, an affecting eloquence, and a venerable air of antiquity well ſuited to excite the beſt emotions of worſhip: and it will be difficult indeed for any private individual to compoſe another Liturgy on the ſame liberal and candid principles, and capable of producing an equal effect on the minds of men accuſtomed to revere that form of devotion. But Proteſtant Diſſenters, feeling no ſuch prepoſſeſſion, might probably be led with leſs difficulty to adopt a form of devotion which their own Paſtor had compoſed with that generality of language which in ſocial worſhip both reaſon and religion require. And therefore, it was a truly laudable effort of zeal and of candour in Mr. Wood, that he thus compoſed, and in his Congregation that they adopted the reſpectable Liturgy now uſed at Mill-Hill Chapel; and there they have exemplified a ſecond time, and under a different form, thoſe principles of Goſpel worſhip in the latitude of Goſpel language, from which Chriſtians never ſhould have departed. The Editor is happy in this opportunity to expreſs his ſincere eſteem for his worthy Correſpondent, and to return his grateful thanks for the kind manner in which he conſents that this letter might be publiſhed.

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neſt, manly, and forcible manner which you have done.

My Wife has lately received a letter from her Brother, in which he mentions that no London Bookſeller of reſpectability will become the Publiſher of your Work, and therefore it is your intention to diſtribute it through the medium of your friends. In this place no one can be more proper than the Gentleman you mention, Mr. George Lloyd. I will with much pleaſure undertake to diſtribute ſome, not only among the Friends of Freedom, but to a few honeſt men who have been nearly alarmed out of their ſenſes.

Your ſympathy has, I aſſure you, been a cordial to me, which greatly outweighs the unfeeling rancour of ſome weak and ill-judging people. My health has been very indifferent for ſome months paſt, and my ſpirits have frequently not been unagitated; but my mind is, and I truſt in God ever will be unbroken, as I feel no criminality in being the victim of war, perſecution, and oppreſſion, and I hope I am prepared to ſuffer more than I have yet done, ſhould more fall to my lot.

From the Abſtract of the Committee of Secrecy, which is all that I have yet ſeen, Mancheſter makes a very conſpicuous figure, though from all the information I have been able to obtain, and I have taken ſome pains upon the ſubject, the charges are without any foundation*. If it had not been for

* The Editor has received from his worthy Correſpondent information, with his permiſſion to publiſh it, reſpecting the report of

Mr. Butterworth Bayley, of whom I make no doubt you have heard, and for a Spy and Informer of the name of Gray, (a ſecond Dunn) I am perſuaded there would not have been even the ſhadow of a plot in this place: but I take it for granted that Mr. Pitt, beſides having an eye to his Tax on Income, means to adopt the ſame ſyſtem of terror and coercion in this Country which has lately been practiced in Ireland.

of the Committee of Secrecy, which is too important to be concealed. "There were eight perſons taken up in Mancheſter in 1798, all charged with High Treaſon upon the information of Gray; one of them was confined in the New-Bailey Priſon in Mancheſter thirteen weeks, another the ſame period in the Cold-Bath-Fields Priſon in London, eight weeks of the time in a ſolitary cell. In the ſame Priſon, another man, with a large family, was confined two years; the other five were confined from a year and a half to three years, during which time they were frequently examined by the Privy Counſel; *and at laſt were finally diſcharged without either Trial or Remuneration.* During the firſt part of this confinement, their treatment was very rigorous, and their food very meagre and unwholeſome."—Such is the account given by Mr. Cowdroy, and confirmed to the Editor by Thomas Walker, Eſq; who repreſents Mr. Cowdroy to be a man of very good character; and that he is the father of the two young men who are firſt mentioned in the information. He is alſo the Printer and Proprietor of the Mancheſter Gazette, the only Paper in that place which is friendly to Liberty. The candid reader will probably agree with the Editor in the opinion that this ſtatement is intitled to credit; and that, in all probability, the hardſhips endured by theſe innocent men, without compenſation or redreſs, form but a ſmall part of the catalogue of unjuſt ſeverities ſuffered by the Friends of Reform about this time throughout the Country, from the vengeance of an arbitrary Adminiſtration. How pitiable is the caſe of theſe unfortunate ſufferers! How odious is the conduct of their Perſecutors! How iniquitous is that ſuſpenſion of law which has protected the Oppreſſors, and forbad the injured to ſeek that redreſs from a Jury which their Oppreſſors had refuſed!

The Editor begs leave here to thank Mr. Walker for his conſent that this letter, and the ſtatement which accompanies it, ſhould be publiſhed; and in ſtrong terms to expreſs that eſteem which he feels for a character ſo diſtinguiſhed by vigour, patriotic zeal, and fortitude, under his unmerited ſufferings.

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Had that honeſtand virtuous man, the late Doctor John Jebb been alive, how miſerable would he have been to have found his predictions reſpecting Mr. Pitt ſo completely verified! The laſt time I ſaw the Doctor was in July 1785, when the Coalition being a ſubject of our converſation, the evils of which he dwelt upon with a warm and honeſt indignation, he ſaid that Lord North, whoſe conduct he very juſtly reprobated, was, politically, the worſt man living, except one. I aſked the name of that one: the Doctor anſwered "William Pitt," and added, "I ſhall "not live long, you probably may; and if you "do, you will ſee him go greater lengths to "deſtroy the remaining Liberties of this "Country than any Miniſter ever did before "him; in my opinion he will prove the moſt "dangerous man this Country ever gave birth "to."

It may be a crime to write the above facts, but in England it is not *yet* one to read them; otherwiſe the communications ſhould not have been made.

With the higheſt ſentiments of reſpect and eſteem, believe me,

Dear Sir,

Very ſincerely and
very truly your's
THOMAS WALKER.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

From FILMER HONYWOOD, Eſq. M. P. *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

YOUR Pamphlet, forwarded to me by my reſpectable friend, Lord Rokeby, has afforded me ſo much pleaſure in the peruſal of it, that altho' retired from public life, and almoſt withdrawn from Society by a weak ſtate of health, impaired by continual public exertion, I cannot refuſe myſelf the ſatisfaction of returning you my ſincere thanks. I conceive that the exertions of cool and temperate men, reaſoning with manly firmneſs, can alone bring back the public mind to a due ſenſe of the real ſituation of the Country, and open their eyes to the danger moſt of all to be dreaded, the loſs of their juſt rights, and the vital ſpirit of the Conſtitution *.

I have the honour to be,
Dear Sir,
With much reſpect,
Your obedient ſervant,
F. HONYWOOD.

LYNSTED LODGE, *April 12th*, 1799.

* This ſhort letter is written in the ſpirit of rational Patriotiſm, and in every reſpect, but his partiality to the Editor's performance, is altogether worthy of its diſtinguiſhed author, Filmer Honywood, Eſq; the Heir of General Honywood, the Repreſentative of Kent, and a Martyr to the Cauſe of Conſtitutional Liberty. In repeated conteſts, except in one inſtance, his Elections for that County were carried ſucceſsfully in oppoſition to the powers of undue influence, exerted againſt him during the Adminiſtrations of Lord North and the Miniſter of the preſent day. The fatigue attending thoſe ſtruggles has far exceeded his ſtrength, and has impaired his health to a degree which leaves his friends little hope of his re-appearance in Parliament. But not in

LETTER XIV.

From RICHARD REYNOLDS, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

PAXTON, *near* ST. NEOT'S, HUNTINGDONSHIRE, *May 10th*, 1799.

Sir,

I AM very much flattered by your obliging remembrance of me in deſiring our worthy friend, Mr. Lindſey, to convey to me ſome few copies of your late Pamphlet. It abounds with important truths, and muſt convince all unprejudiced perſons of the dangerous conſequences of the preſent War, and that they are likely to prove fatal to our Liberty and

in vain has this true Patriot willingly ſuffered the loſs of health, to aſſiſt in preſerving the Liberties of his Country. The eſteem and regret of the Public have followed him to his retirement; and his declining days are cheared, even under the affliction of habitual indiſpoſition, by the ſilent teſtimony of his own mind, approving the ſacrifice he has made, and anticipating the ſucceſs which ſimilar acts of generous men, devoting themſelves to the Cauſe of Public Virtue muſt ultimately ſecure. But after the Editor has recorded the virtuous exertions, and the ſufferings of Mr. F. Honywood, which were the unavoidable conſequences of thoſe abuſes and corruptions of the Conſtitution, which he had conſtantly combated, his mind naturally turns to times long paſt, and to the recollection of his Kinſman, General Honywood. In his youth, ſoon after his ſettlement in Eſſex, the Editor was honoured with a ſhare in his friendſhip, which he continued to poſſeſs after his removal into Yorkſhire, in middle age, till the death of General Honywood. This gallant Officer had fought with great courage and perſonal proweſs, the Rebel Highlanders at home, and the French abroad. And to the courage and fire of a Military Commander, he added the humane virtues of a benevolent and friendly diſpoſition, and a firm attachment to the Cauſe of Civil and Religious Liberty.

To Mr. Filmer Honywood the Editor returns his grateful thanks for his conſent that this letter ſhould be publiſhed, and for the opportunity thus afforded him to ſatisfy his feelings by doing this juſtice to him, and to the memory of his gallant Relation.

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our Conſtitution. The various infringements of our freedom, by the preſent meaſures purſued, muſt be particularly painful to a Patriot who has perſeveringly laboured for a ſeries of years to preſerve our juſt and legal Rights. It is a deplorable ſubject to reflect on, that the Gentry of the Aſſociated Counties throughout England, particularly thoſe of the great County of York, (once ſuch zealous Friends of Liberty, when you was their active Chairman) ſhould in the courſe of a few years have abandoned their principles, and have followed the example of the Grand Apoſtate, whoſe portrait is well drawn by you.

I hope, Sir, that the hand of Power will not be uſed to moleſt you for your very free and ſevere, but moſt true and juſt obſervations on the Public Adminiſtration. That you may enjoy uninterrupted health and complete ſatisfaction of mind in having choſen to comply with the dictates of duty, at the hazard of perſonal ſafety, is the earneſt wiſh of him who is with the higheſt regard and eſteem

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

RICHARD REYNOLDS.*

* The Son of Biſhop Reynolds, and the friend of Mr. Maſon; but untinctured with Church prejudice, and neither duped by Miniſterial artifice, nor intimidated by the contagious frenzy of the times, Mr. Reynolds now ſtands alone the Advocate of Political Reformation in the County he reſides in, once diſtinguiſhed for its zeal in the Cauſe of Liberty. Deſerted by its former friends, expoſed to calumny, diſappointed of the hope of Public Good, and depreſſed with a heavy load of domeſtic affliction, he yet ſupports his mind with becoming fortitude, and by his example and his encouragimg appprobation, animates others to a ſimilar courſe of honeſt perſeverance. How reſpectable is the privacy of the aged Patriot thus benevolently affectioned, thus virtuouſly employed!

employed! Cheered by the consolations of a rational Religion, and dignified by the conscious rectitude of his mind, he practices the virtue which he recommends, and reaps that reward which Power and Grandeur may envy, but never can attain.

The Editor requests Mr. Reynolds to accept his grateful thanks for his consent to publish this letter, for the kind expressions which accompanied his consent, and for many more proofs of his regard in the long course of their correspondence, respecting which he feels nothing to regret, but that the chances of life, and the similarity of their wishes and pursuits, and their active concurrence in the same political measures have never proved so fortunate to the Editor as to make him personally known to Mr. Reynolds.

NUMBER

NUMBER XVIII.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with* CHARLES POLHILL, Eſq; EARL STANHOPE, &c. *in* 1800, *on a* County Meeting *propoſed in* Kent.

LETTER I.

From C. POLHILL, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

BY this time I ſuppoſe you will have read the Miniſter's anſwer to Bonaparte's letter to his Majeſty. Lord S. called here laſt night with it, and brought a Petition to our High Sheriff, which I altered, and he agreed to; but not being quite ſatisfied with ſome parts of his, I drew up this morning the incloſed Addreſs *, which, with ſome very immaterial alterations, he did me the honour to approve of, and deſired me to ſend it to you, which I ſhould certainly have done otherwiſe. It will be in the Papers in a few days, if the Sheriff accept; if he does not, by a Call from ſeven Freeholders, according to the Act.

Wiſhing this year and this century may end with happier and more favourable omens than

* For this Addreſs ſee the Preliminary Papers of this Volume.

we have reaſon to expect, and if not that the 19th century may begin with better auſpices than this will then conclude with, and with *multos et felices* to all in whom you intereſt yourſelf,

I am, Dear Sir,
Moſt faithfully your's,
C. POLHILL*.

P. S. Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis,
Candidus imperti, ſi non his utere nobis.

* The Editor is much honoured by the confidence which this Veteran Advocate for Liberty has been pleaſed to place in him, allowing him to publiſh his letters as in his diſcretion he judges to be proper; and he requeſts him to accept his grateful acknowledgments. Mr. Polhill began his political courſe in the year 1745, when he attended a County Meeting at Maidſtone in ſupport of the Proteſtant Succeſſion, then endangered by the Rebellion of the Highlanders in Scotland; and ſince that time he has taken an active part in all political meaſures agitated at County Meetings there, with the weight which is due to him, as the chief of a reſpectable family, long diſtinguiſhed by zeal for Liberty, and as a Patriot determined, in his public conduct, by a ſincere and ardent wiſh to promote what he conceives to be the Cauſe of his Country, and the general intereſt of mankind.

The Anceſtor of Mr. Polhill, nearly at the cloſe of the Reign of King William, acted on the ſame principles, and with the ſame courage and reſolution, when he promoted the Kentiſh Petition, and ſuſtained the violence of an arbitrary Houſe of Commons. Diſpleaſed at the freedom with which the Juſtices of the Peace and Grand Jury of Kent had remonſtrated againſt their factious proceedings, the Houſe treated their Petition as a Libel, and by an unprecedented ſtretch of its power, Mr. Polhill and the other Kentiſh Gentlemen by whom the Petition had been preſented, were committed to Priſon, in which they lay till the prorogation of Parliament. They had the ſatisfaction, however, to know, that the rigour of the Houſe was condemned by the Nation; while their conduct was applauded, and themſelves were careſſed in their Priſon, and honoured as the Confeſſors of Liberty.

LETTER

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* CHARLES POLHILL, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 13*th*, 1800,
BEDALE.

Dear Sir,

I Have juſt received your favour of the 8th inſtant, which has been unfortunately delayed two or three days for want of being directed to my Poſt Town, which is Bedale. I am much obliged to you and Lord Stanhope for your early communication of the Addreſs intended to be ſent to the High Sheriff of Kent, which has my entire approbation. But whether the principal Gentlemen in Yorkſhire who think as we do, that the late overture for Peace which Buonaparte has been wiſe enough to make ought to have been accepted by the Britiſh Cabinet, are willing to engage in calling a Meeting of the County of York upon the ſubject, is more than I know. I will however loſe no time in writing to them upon it; and will let you and Lord Stanhope know the reſult of my application. The power of the Crown is increaſed to a degree far exceeding what it was in the American War; and before ſuch a ſtep be taken as that propoſed by Lord Stanhope and yourſelf, it ſeems expedient to concert as extenſive an union of well-diſpoſed perſons as poſſible, in order to have ſome chance of ſucceſs.

Attempts of this kind by ſingle Counties, or even by ſeveral Counties, without a great

and

and decisive majority in each County, I fear will do no good to the Cause of Peace and Liberty.

I heartily wish you, Sir, all health and happiness, and am, with great regard,

Very sincerely your's,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* EARL STANHOPE.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 13th*, 1800.

My Dear Lord,

I Thank you for the early communication of your intended Address to the High-Sheriff of the County of Kent, which has my approbation and individual concurrence to the utmost extent of my power. But whether our friends in Yorkshire will be willing to co-operate with zeal, whether co-operation in London and in other parts of the Kingdom may be expected, are questions to which I am not at present prepared to return an answer. With this view, however, to ascertain these necessary points as far as I can, I will instantly write to my Correspondents, and let your Lordship know the result.

But before that result can be known, my Lord, would it not be well to allow yourself a little time, not to pause, but personally to apply to the principal Friends of Liberty in London and the neighbouring Counties, and

to

to concert with them what may be beſt to be done? No one knows better than your Lordſhip that the power of the Crown has received an immenſe increaſe ſince we firſt ſtood forth together to check its increaſe. Without an almoſt unanimous application to the Crown from the different Towns, Cities, and Counties of the Kingdom, ſucceſs is not to be expected; Miniſters will truſt to their influence in Parliament; and a negative by their advice will too probably be given to the Petitions of a few Counties and Places, however rational, however reſpectful to the Crown, and however manifeſt their tendency may be to promote the intereſt of the Country, and even to preſerve its internal tranquillity.

Be aſſured, my dear Lord, I do not throw out theſe cautious ſuggeſtions for any other purpoſe than to ſecure ſucceſs to what my heart ſo thoroughly approves. We are now in the middle of Winter; a new campaign cannot be opened for ſeveral months: there is time for counſel and previous arrangements; and it is, in my judgment, of the utmoſt conſequence to the Public not to diſcourage the Popular Party, not to exhauſt their ſtrength by movements not ſufficiently combined, or not combined to a ſufficient extent.

With my beſt wiſhes for your health, happineſs, and ſucceſs in all your virtuous attempts to accelerate Peace, and ſecure, by peaceful, means our Conſtitutional Liberties,

I am, my Dear Lord,

Ever moſt faithfully your's,

C. WYVILL.

EARL STANHOPE.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WM. WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *and other* Yorkſhire Gentlemen, &c.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 13*th*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

THIS morning I received from Mr. Polhill of Kent a letter containing a copy of an Addreſs to the High-Sheriff of that County, requeſting him to call a Meeting of the County to petition the King to avail himſelf of the late overture by the Government of France to negociate an honourable and equitable Peace. The Addreſs is well worded; and I underſtand it was drawn up in concert with Lord Stanhope, by whoſe deſire Mr. Polhill ſent it to me. If the High-Sheriff ſhould decline calling the County together, they ſeem determined to invite the Freeholders and other Inhabitants to meet in the way preſcribed by law in ſuch caſe.

My anſwer adviſed them to take time, to uſe caution, and to endeavour by previous concert and arrangement to obtain as extenſive a co-operation as poſſible; at the ſame time I promiſed to communicate their propoſition to the principal Friends of Peace and Conſtitutional Liberty with whom I have the happineſs to be connected.

In purſuance of this promiſe, I take the earlieſt opportunity in my power to convey this intelligence to you. And I requeſt that you will favour me with your opinion, whether it

is probable that a ſimilar propoſition would meet with effectual ſupport, 1ſt in Yorkſhire, 2d in the Kingdom at large. Without having good reaſon to believe, not only that the Freeholders of this County would generally concur with us in ſuch a meaſure, but alſo, that it would have the approbation of the major part of the Nation, I conceive that it would be worſe than uſeleſs to call a Meeting of this County. On the other hand, if the Public is ready for the meaſure both in Yorkſhire, and in other parts of the Kingdom, there ſeems to be a good opportunity to come forward, as we ſhould certainly have ſtrong grounds to ſtand on.

My beſt wiſhes attend you; and I am, with great regard,

Dear Sir,
Your's ever moſt ſincerely,
C. WYVILL.

To	
H. Duncombe, Eſq.	Walter Fawkes, Eſq.
W. Strickland, Eſq.	Sir R. Milbanke
W. Wrightſon, Eſq.	Sir W. Milner
R. S. Milnes, Eſq.	Jonathan Walker, Eſq.
James Milnes, Eſq.	S. Crompton, Eſq.
Sir T. Gaſcoigne	Gen. Hale
Chriſtr. Wilſon, Eſq.	J. Yorke, Eſq.
S. Shore, Eſq.	H. Peirſe, Eſq.
	F. Hickes, Eſq.

Alſo, nearly the ſame to

Rev. T. Lindſey	J. R. Fenwick, Eſq.
Lord Lanſdowne	T. Bigge, Eſq.
The Hon. T. Erſkine	

LETTER

LETTER V.

From W. WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

CUSWORTH, 15*th Jan.* 1800.

My Dear Sir,

UNTIL ſome oppoſition to the meaſures of the King's Miniſters can be revived in Parliament, I look with ſlender hopes to any efforts that can be made in the Country. Parliament is the organ from which the Country is accuſtomed to receive its tone; and though not the perfect organ one could wiſh, the arguments that will operate on the minds of the People muſt originate there. Conſidering the Seceſſion, even in the way you have conſidered it, as an Appeal to the People, it muſt be admitted that it has failed; and though in ſome caſes it might have been productive of the beſt effects upon the grounds you have ſo well diſcuſſed, yet in this inſtance I fear it is too evident that the confidence of the Country in the oppoſition has not been increaſed; and I am convinced that any attempt to take the ſenſe of the Freeholders, till there appears to be a very great change in the ſentiments of the Landed or Commercial Intereſt, or both, would be in the higheſt degree impolitic.

I am, Dear Sir,
Very faithfully your's,
W. WRIGHTSON *.

* By this anſwer of his excellent friend, Mr. Wrightſon, the truth and accuracy of the Editor's repreſentation to Mr. Polhill and Lord Stanhope in the next letter, diſcouraging the propoſed Meeting,

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* CHARLES POLHILL, Eſq.

BURTON HALL, *Jan. 24th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

I Have received eleven anſwers from Yorkſhire Gentlemen, and three from Gentlemen of the Counties of Durham and Northumberland, whom I conſulted on the ſubject of your intended application to the High-Sheriff of Kent. I am ſorry to inform you they are all clearly of opinion, that it would at preſent be imprudent to call the Freeholders of the reſpective Counties together, to conſider the propriety even of a Petition for Peace. It ſeems however to be the general opinion, that the diſtreſs of the Country has been greatly increaſed by the War in the courſe of the laſt year; that the deſire for Peace is becoming ſtronger every day; and that the lapſe of a few months, or poſſibly a few weeks, may bring on that criſis of Public opinion in which Petitions may be propoſed with the beſt hopes of general concurrence and ultimate ſucceſs.

I beg that you and Lord Stanhope will believe, that the Gentlemen I have conſulted on this occaſion are perſons in whoſe judgment and zeal for the Common Cauſe I do entirely rely; my opinion is alſo the ſame as theirs; but

Meeting, on account of the backwardneſs of the County of York to co-operate with the County of Kent at that time, is ſufficiently aſcertained. The anſwers of his other Correſpondents, therefore, though preſerved, are thought not neceſſary to be inſerted here.

but if it were not, if I judged differently of the temper of this County, and of the Kingdom, yet after their declared opinion of the neceſſity for a little longer patience, it would be utterly impoſſible for me to take a ſingle ſtep in the buſineſs, towards bringing on Public Meetings in the North of England, ſo long as this Body of our moſt diſtinguiſhed Friends are diſinclined to concur. And I will indulge the hope that you, Lord Stanhope, and your friends in Kent, will ſuſpend your application to the Sheriff till there is a proſpect of a powerful co-operation,—1ſt in London, 2d in Yorkſhire and the other Northern Counties, who are only waiting for the proper moment to come forward.

Allow me to obſerve, that although I moſt cordially approve the matter of your Addreſs, yet I wiſh *the Inhabitants of the County* may not be requeſted to meet, as I conceive it will more tend to raiſe jealouſies than to increaſe your ſtrength at Maidſtone. But be this as you and Lord Stanhope may judge beſt; I will only add, that I am quite certain no ſuch call *of the Inhabitants at large* would be adopted in Yorkſhire.

With great regard, I remain,
Dear Sir,
Moſt faithfully your's,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER VII.

From CHARLES POLHILL, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Sir,

I Received your wiſe and friendly letter, and ſhall adviſe my Lord to ſtop. A few words convince me the word *Inhabitants* was put in totally againſt my judgment and inclination. But I will take care it ſhall be in no letter that I will ſign.—He is the man to bring (at a proper time) ſuch a thing forward —We could not do any thing without him.—I have not ſtrength of body and mind ſufficient for the taſk.—I am now near 75, and have long laboured under a complaint which is gradually wearing out. But life wears with it. Living quite retired, and converſing more by letter than perſonally with ſome of the firſt perſons of integrity and public ſpirit in this Kingdom, I certainly ought and do moſt willingly ſubſcribe to their opinion, and ſhall recommend that we lie on our oars. Aſſure yourſelf and your friends that we will do nothing without, or contrary to their opinion.—I do not know the motives of others.

I have but one view, the preſervation of this glorious Conſtitution, and the happineſs and welfare of mankind at large.

I am, with eſteem and regard, Rev. Sir,
Your faithful and
moſt obedient ſervant,
C. POLHILL.

Jan. 30th, 1800.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

From EARL STANHOPE *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

CHEVENING-HOUSE, *Feb. 4th*, 1800.

My Dear Wyvill,

I Have been in Town, and have executed your commiſſion; and the reſult is as follows: ſome perſons are very ſanguine about County Meetings on the ſubject of Peace. Others are of a different opinion as to the probable reſult; and ſo far as I can judge, the reſpective opinions are founded on the reſpective obſervations of the individuals which I allude to. One opinion, however, ſeems *more general;* and that is a wiſh for the People to call the Meetings *themſelves;* nor do I diſagree to this idea, although I have ſet my name to the Kent Requiſition. I particularly aſked Mr. Fox what he thought had beſt be done in Yorkſhire, as to calling the *Freeholders* only, or the *other Inhabitants* alſo. He is *moſt clearly* for the *latter* mode. Perhaps, your beſt way will be, for you (without mentioning any perſon's name) to aſk him, from yourſelf, his opinion about it, that you may be the more convinced he does not ſay this out of civility merely.

There is a middle mode, and that is the calling the *Houſeholders.* To this I ſhould have no objection, if others have not. But as for calling the *Freeholders* only, the idea is quite ſcouted here. Almoſt all think the Pub-

lic wiſh for Peace, though now torpid. I never ſaw Mr. Fox ſo well in his health at any time as at preſent. I went over to Holland Houſe on purpoſe to paſs a morning with him and his excellent Nephew. He told me he had heard from you.

Some perſons in the City of Weſtminſter wiſh for a Meeting in Weſtminſter. But what is of moſt conſequence is, that it is not quite unlikely that a meaſure will take effect, which, *if it ſhould*, will produce more union amongſt the Friends of Peace than any which has been thought of yet.

Give me one line to ſay this is duly received, and believe me,

Dear W.

Moſt cordially and affectionately your's *.

* Earl Stanhope's ſignature is wanting in this letter; and it is wanting alſo in ſome other letters which at various times have been received from his Lordſhip by the Editor. It is needleſs to remark the accommodating ſpirit in which this letter appears to have been written: It is ſufficiently obvious; and it is not leſs ſo, that a diſpoſition exiſted in the Counties adjoining to the Capital, to adhere to the practice of aſſembling the Inhabitants, which in ſeveral inſtances thoſe Counties had recently adopted. In Kent this diſpoſition ſeems not to have been very prevalent; and the objections of Mr. Polhill and his friends might have induced their noble Leader to change his plan, and to revert to the mode of aſſembling the Freeholders, from which Kent ſeldom, and the diſtant Counties never had deviated, or nearly ſo. But in Surrey and Middleſex a more deciſive preference was given to the more numerous Meetings of the Inhabitants: and even the influence of Mr. Fox probably would have been exerted in vain, had he choſen to exert it to bring back thoſe Counties to the more limited, but cuſtomary practice of the Counties at a greater diſtance from London.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* EARL STANHOPE.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 8*th*, 1800.

My Dear Lord,

YOUR letter of the 4th inſtant gave me the greateſt pleaſure. The ſmall increaſe of the Minority on Mr. Fox's attending on Parliament again had been a diſappointment to me. Your Lordſhip's letter revived my hopes. I ſee your journey to London has been productive of ſome happy conſequences; and I hope for more. I have at various times thrown out to a noble friend of yours, ſtrong wiſhes for an union between him and the Great Man with whom you lately ſpent a morning. Could that be effected, a Revolution would not be to be apprehended; at leaſt not ſo much as it muſt be dreaded while a diſjointed Oppoſition are unable to put a ſtop to the mad career of Miniſters; for they and their ſyſtem, in my opinion, are infinitely more dangerous to the Peace, as well as to the Freedom of the Country, than any other men, or any other ſyſtem which has been avowed in England. I flatter myſelf what you allude to in yours, has ſome relation to thoſe two excellent perſons, and ſhall rejoice to hear that what you now think not unlikely to happen, has actually taken place; I mean the union of two men who are both the moſt able and the moſt willing to controul the tendency of this

this wild Adminiſtration to drive England to a Revolution.

I intend very ſhortly either to write to Mr. F. upon the ſubject you mention, or elſe to explain myſelf farther upon it to your Lordſhip, and ſend him a copy of my letter. Perhaps this laſt will be the beſt way of doing it.

Accept my beſt wiſhes, and believe me,

My dear Lord,

With moſt cordial regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

N. B. I ſee no reaſon to think your letter had been opened. It certainly had not been delayed.

LETTER X.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* EARL STANHOPE.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 12*th*, 1800.

My Dear Lord,

I AM not ſurpriſed that your Lordſhip found many of our friends in London eager for Meetings in the County of the Inhabitants at large.

But though their opinion is reinforced by the much greater authority of Mr. Fox, I feel that I owe it to the Public Cauſe to ſtate my reaſons for continuing to think, that in the preſent ſtage of the buſineſs, it will be prudent not to depart from the uſual line of invitation. For that is the ſenſe in which I wiſh to be underſtood.

underſtood. In Weſtminſter, Marybone, Pancras, the Tower Hamlets, Chelſea, Greenwich, Kenſington, and alſo in the Cities of York, Durham, and many others, it has been uſual for the Inhabitants to meet; they often have done it formerly; and recently they did it on the occaſion of paſſing Petitions againſt the Slave Trade. I therefore ſhould rejoice to hear of Meetings in all thoſe places of the whole Collective Body. It is poſſible the time may come when ſimilar Meetings in the Counties may be expedient; and that time will be arrived, as I conceive, when Petitions paſſed by the major part of the Counties in the uſual manner have been preſented in vain. It will then remain for the Counties to take the laſt ſtep allowed by the law, and to call in the aid of the Inhabitants at large to add weight to the requeſts already tendered ineffectually by the Freeholders. But why not begin, I ſhall be aſked, in that method which I acknowledge will add ſtrength to the Petitioning Freeholders at the period alluded to? Becauſe I think the departure from the accuſtomed mode, *at preſent*, would not tend to ſtrengthen, on the contrary, it would, as I apprehend, weaken the Party in the more diſtant Counties eſpecially, who wiſh to preſent Petitions. I judge it would weaken us from what paſſed in the North in 1795 and 1797.

At the firſt of theſe periods, Meetings in the Counties were held to petition in ſupport of the Bill of Rights; they were called in the uſual form; yet ſuch was the apprehenſion of tumult,

tumult, that our Adverſaries found it an eaſy buſineſs to raiſe a clamour againſt us, and run us down as a ſet of Traitors and Incendiaries, who aimed at nothing leſs than the introduction of Anarchy and Confuſion, for the purpoſe of overturning the Government by King, Lords, and Commons. At the ſecond of theſe periods, the wiſh for Peace was general: yet ſuch was the ſtill-remaining dread of a Civil War, and a Republican Revolution in the manner of France, that, after ſeveral previous Meetings held at York, it was found impoſſible to gain the confidence of the Public in this County; at leaſt, it was impoſſible to gain it to a ſufficient degree to warrant the prudence of a County Meeting, though propoſed in the uſual form, and in the moſt moderate language. As far as I can judge, this extreme apprehenſion of danger from Popular Meetings in the Counties is conſiderably abated. A new fear has in ſome meaſure taken its place, and probably will increaſe with the increaſing diſtreſſes of the Country. I mean the fear of a Military Government eſtabliſhed on the ruin of Property, as well as of Public Freedom. I truſt that in a ſhort time, probably in the courſe of the current year, this ſalutary fear, and the juſt concern to preſerve the Conſtitution, will have ſo far increaſed as to enable us to cope with the whole ſtrength of the Miniſter in this and many other Counties, provided we take the uſual courſe of calling the Freeholders. But ſhould we innovate in our call, and ſummon the Inhabitants at large,

we

we ſhould furniſh the friends of the Miniſter with the means to excite again the clamour of the Country: again we ſhould be treated as Traitors and Incendiaries; and the calumny would be again believed by many who might have joined, or at leaſt might not have oppoſed us, if an innovation in the call had not renewed their alarm. But the very ſame perſons, if once they ſhall have joined in our Petitions, will reſent their rejection, and more readily approve any legal meaſure, however ſtrong, which promiſes to add weight to their repeated remonſtrances.

In the American War, the Petitions of the Freeholders were allowed to have had a deciſive effect; and they had it, becauſe they were nearly unanimous. In a ſhort time the ſame unanimity will again be found to prevail in that Great Body, and their applications will then have, I hope, equal influence with Parliament. But if we raiſe jealouſies among them, eſpecially among thoſe of greateſt property, by calling in the Collective Body, no one can ſay that County Meetings in that caſe will have the ſame good effect. And what calamities may reſult from ineffectual Petitions of the People, it were impoſſible to enumerate; but it is plain they would be very great.

We ſay, and we ſay truly, that we wiſh to ſupport the Conſtitution on its true principles; that we wiſh by pacific means alone to check the Miniſter's ſyſtem of Foreign War and Internal Coercion; and that a Revolution in our opinion can only thus be prevented.

But

But ſurely we ſhall act moſt conſiſtently with theſe declarations, and be beſt entitled to credit, by not departing from the uſual mode of ſummoning *the Freeholders only*; till the haughty rejection of their requeſt ſhall convince them generally that they muſt call in the aid of the Inhabitants as the laſt legal meaſure which can add energy to their efforts, and thus prevent a recurrence to the extremity of forcible reſiſtance. If we begin in the accuſtomed mode, the Inhabitants at large will not be diſguſted; and, if neceſſary, they will give us on ſome future occaſion their beſt aſſiſtance. But if we begin with an innovation which will diſguſt the Freeholders, or any weighty portion of them, our plan of protecting Liberty, and yet preventing a Revolution, ſeems but too likely to fail.

As ſo much appears to depend on a right deciſion of this queſtion, I have thought it my duty to ſtate my reaſons fully for wiſhing a leſs extenſive call to be adopted *at preſent* than that which has been lately propoſed in Kent. I am pretty certain that my ſentiments do not differ materially from thoſe of the friends with whom I am accuſtomed to act both in Yorkſhire and the adjoining Counties. I ſubmit them to the conſideration of yourſelf and Mr. Fox with the greateſt deference and reſpect; and remain with moſt cordial regard, My Dear Lord Stanhope,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.*

* A duplicate of this letter was ſent to Mr. Fox on the 13th of February, 1800.

NUMBER

NUMBER XIX.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with the late* JOHN MILLAR, Eſq; Profeſſor *of* Morality *in the* Univerſity *of* Glaſgow.

LETTER I.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* PROFESSOR MILLAR.

BURTON-HALL, *near* BEDALE, *Yorſhire*, *July 27th*, 1800.

Sir,

I WAS favoured yeſterday by Mr. Palmes with the communication of your letter to him of the 4th of this month, in which I have found ſo many obliging expreſſions of your eſteem and friendly ſuggeſtions of caution to me, that I muſt without delay beg your acceptance of my ſincere acknowledgements. It is a pleaſure to me to obſerve that my ſentiments are entirely agreed with yours, Sir, on the propriety of inaction, at preſent, both on the part of Mr. Fox and his friends in Parliament, and alſo, on the part of thoſe Advocates of the People who wiſh to ſee Popular Meetings

cates of the People who wiſh to ſee Popular Meetings held, when with effect they can be held, in oppoſition to the ſyſtem of Mr. Pitt. No effortsagainſt the baſeneſs and tyranny of this ſyſtem, till calamity has rouzed the Public from that ſtate of ſtupid ſubmiſſion in which it has been long ſunk, are likely to have any good effect in Parliament, or at Meetings of the Counties. Even from rational publications in favour of Popular Rights, little immediate effect is to be hoped. The evils of our ſituation may indeed be demonſtrated; but calamity alone can overcome the fears or apathy of the People, and ſtimulate them to vindicate their Conſtitutional Freedom. But when the hour of calamity is come, and far diſtant I think it cannot be, it may be found uſeful to have circulated extenſively ſuch publications, whoſe aim is to inſtruct the People how to value their Political Rights, and for their recovery to depend on legal exertions alone. If you, Sir, and the other honoured Patriots in Scotland with whom you are connected, ſhould approve my late Pamphlet on Seceſſion, in this point of view, and claſs it among thoſe publications, which it would be right to circulate in that part of the Kingdom, I certainly ſhall feel myſelf much encouraged by the approbation of ſuch men; and I will without delay direct a Third Edition to be printed at York, unleſs you would have the goodneſs to aſſiſt me to get it printed at Glaſgow, and really could do ſo without any material inconvenience. As this new Edition could only be circulated

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in Scotland privately, the Bookſellers there not daring, any more than thoſe in England, to avow the Publication, I ſuppoſe 800 or 1000 copies would be as many as the active Friends of the Common Cauſe could eaſily circulate; and for that number I will gladly be reſponſible. The number circulated by private Friends in England has been near 2000 copies.

I am aware, Sir, that I am now taking a very great liberty, which yet, I truſt, you will conſider as not in the leaſt degree inconſiſtent with a very high reſpect for your character. The more highly I eſteem it, the more ſenſibly muſt I feel myſelf encouraged by your kind partiality, and the general concurrence of our ſentiments. Accept, therefore, I intreat you, the offer of my beſt thanks, and the aſſurance of my heart-felt eſteem and regard. *

I am, Sir,
Your much obliged
and faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

* This letter ſufficiently explains the circumſtances which induced the Editor to addreſs Profeſſor Millar on this occaſion. He truſted he ſhould be more than excuſed, becauſe he knew the frank and generous character of the Profeſſor; and he was not diſappointed.

LETTER II.

From PROFESSOR MILLAR *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MILHEUGH, *near* GLASGOW,
4th August, 1800.

Rev. Sir,

I AM glad to find that you propoſe to circulate your late Pamphlet more extenſively than has hitherto been done in this part of the Iſland, and ſhall be happy to give any aſſiſtance in my power towards the execution of your plan. It ſurely is of great importance that the People ſhould be impreſſed with the extent of that corrupt influence which pervades our Great Counſels, and that they ſhould ſee in a proper light the Seceſſion of Mr. Fox and his Friends, which in reality has reduced an Aſſembly, formerly the object of univerſal reſpect and curioſity, to the inſignificance of a Town Council in a rotten Borough. I think it impoſſible to explain thoſe two important articles more clearly, or to ſtate the concluſions that reſult from them more forcibly than is done in your maſterly performance.

Since I had the honour of your letter I have had a particular converſation on the ſubject with a Bookſeller in Glaſgow, who is of opinion it would be moſt expedient that the printing ſhould be executed under your own eye, and nothing but the mere circulation entruſted to Bookſellers at a diſtance. He thinks at the ſame time, that as the Pamphlet has already been handed about in this part of the

the Country, and as the ſubject has in ſome meaſure loſt the edge of novelty, an extenſive ſale cannot be expected. Upon conſidering theſe circumſtances, 200 copies are all that he can undertake to diſtribute; and I underſtand he propoſes even this limited ſale by the aſſiſtance of his brethren of the trade, as well as by means of his own cuſtomers. You will therefore have this in your view in computing the number of copies for the whole Iſland. I agree with you in thinking that the time is at no great diſtance which is likely to produce a revolution in the political ſentiments of the Nation. While the Mercantile Intereſt enjoy a proſperous trade, no conſiderations reſpecting Government will have any weight in the oppoſite ſcale.

But the aſpect of things in that quarter is at preſent not very favourable. In particular the jealouſy of the Britiſh maritime power, which appeared ſo remarkably in the War before the laſt, and which of late has been ſmothered by the terror of French opinions, has begun to revive, and threatens to hamper our commercial dealings. If our Miniſters ſhall lower their tone*, and propoſe to negociate, they will probably be ſubjected to ſuch mortifications as will expoſe them to contempt; and if they ſhould ſtand out, with Bonaparte at the head of the French Nation, they muſt engage in a different conflict from what they have hitherto experienced. No good can be expected until they are driven

* The Editor has ventured here to make a verbal correction.

from the helm with diſgrace*. For which reaſon I hope nothing will be done in the way of Addreſſes to remove their embarraſſment. Mr. Pitt acknowledged that he formerly negociated without wiſhing to ſucceed, but merely with the view of obtaining a permanent revenue.

I am, with the higheſt eſteem, Rev. Sir,
Your faithful humble ſervant,
JOHN MILLAR.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* PROFESSOR MILLAR.

BURTON-HALL, *October 11th*, 1800.

Sir,

I Have juſt received from York two hundred and thirty copies of the Pamphlet on Seceſſion, of which thirty are ſtitched in blue-paper covers; the reſt are in ſheets.

* The Editor ſincerely concurs with the worthy Profeſſor in this ſentiment. For what National Good can be expected from ſuch men? From men who had begun their political courſe with the ſevereſt reprobation of the ſyſtem of corruption, and with correſponding efforts to deſtroy it; who had received the ſtrongeſt teſtimonies of the approbation and gratitude of the Public, and had taſted the high ſatisfaction of an elevation to Power, becauſe by their virtuous exertions they had won the confidence of their Country; and yet whoſe hearts could permit them, with glaring inconſiſtence, to renounce the honourable principles of their youth, and to adopt the baſe ſyſtem they had ſo juſtly condemned. Yet ſooner than could have been expected, a few months ago, the diſgraceful expulſion from the Cabinet of one of the perſons alluded to by Mr. Millar has been effected, by an extraordinary effort of Public virtue, deciding on a caſe of corrupt illegality acknowledged by the Criminal himſelf. The compl ants of the late inſulted advocates of the People are now proved inconteſtably to have been juſt and well founded, and the diſabuſed Nation at laſt exults that juſtice has begun its courſe.—*April 15th*, 1805.

They

They will be ſent on Monday next to Catterick-Bridge in three packets, to be forwarded from thence to Mr. X. Z's, Bookſeller in Glaſgow, by the firſt coach which may paſs by that place to Glaſgow; and I hope they will arrive ſafe at Mr. X. Z's on Wedneſday the 15th, or Thurſday the 16th of October at fartheſt.

I requeſt you, Sir, to accept the thirty covered copies, and to diſtribute them among your friends; and I intruſt Mr. X. Z. with the ſale of the remaining two hundred copies. When theſe two hundred copies are ſold, or as many of them as Mr. X. Z. and his Correſpondents can hope to diſpoſe of, I wiſh to teſtify to him and to them my ſenſe of their zeal and courage in the Cauſe of Liberty, by making them a preſent of the whole of the profits ariſing from the ſale, in ſuch proportion as you ſhall judge to be proper, if at my earneſt requeſt you will have the goodneſs to undertake the trouble of ſettling the balance of their accounts.

They will have done what the principal Bookſellers in London did not dare to do; and they will have done it in the face of greater danger, from laws, in themſelves, more ſevere, and more harſhly adminiſtered in Scotland than they are in this Country. And, therefore, your compliance with this requeſt will add greatly to the obligations you have conferred upon me, which I acknowledge with pleaſure are very important. Your kind ſolicitude for my perſonal ſafety * is what I

* The kind expreſſions of the Profeſſor's anxiety here alluded to, are contained in a letter of his, now in the Editor's poſſeſſion, but not addreſſed to him; he wiſhed to publiſh it; but at preſent the inſertion of it in this ſeries would have been improper.

feel moſt particularly indebted to you for; I thank you for it with the moſt cordial ſincerity; and I feel the moſt anxious wiſh, that the part you are pleaſed to take in promoting the diſtribution of this Pamphlet, may be productive of no unpleaſant conſequence to you Sir, or to Mr. X. Z. and his Correſpondents.

I am, Sir, your much obliged,
and moſt faithful,
humble ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER IV.

From PROFESSOR MILLAR *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MILNBUGH, *near* GLASGOW,
18*th October*, 1800.

Rev. Sir,

I HAD the pleaſure of receiving your letter on Monday laſt, and was in Glaſgow on Tueſday the 16th; but the copies of the Pamphlet had not then arrived. An accident has happened which I did not look for, and which is rather unlucky, the failure of the Boookſeller. I found, to my ſurpriſe, his ſhop was ſhut; but I procured an interview with him. Things are going on, he aſſures me, to an immediate ſettlement with his Creditors; but, in the mean time, there will be no difficulty, he ſays, in purſuing the meaſures propoſed for the diſpoſal of this Publication, as by virtue of your authority I ſhall conſider myſelf as entitled to prevent the copies from coming

coming into the hands of the Creditors. Your generoſity, with reſpect to the profits in favour of the Bookſellers who are to be employed, makes this matter perfectly eaſy. I have employed a friend to tranſact the buſineſs in my abſence, and after a ſmall interval from the time when the copies arrive, which even independent of this accident was thought proper, I make no doubt but the ſale will commence.

I beg you will accept of my acknowledgments for the copies which you have ſent to me in particular, and which I ſhall endeavour to diſtribute in a manner moſt conſiſtent with the public-ſpirited view of the Publication, by preſenting them to ſuch perſons as appear beſt qualified to judge of the arguments and views contained in them. They come very ſeaſonably in the preſent criſis, and ſeem in ſome meaſure to reverberate the ſimilar notes which have lately been ſounded in the Whig Club. If there be a poſſibility of making converts in the queſtion which you handle, the peculiar ſeaſon for it cannot be far off. The reſignation of Thugut, which I ſaw an account of in the laſt Papers, will probably convey a ſtrong ſenſation to the Patrons of the War in other Countries, though I do not ſuppoſe it will produce in this Country any voluntary imitation. The Scarcity, of which there is too good ground to apprehend the continuance, and which is now generally imputed to its true cauſes, is another alarming circumſtance.

I ſhall take the liberty of writing to you

again, as ſoon as any progreſs is made in regard to your Publication. I was happy to hear from you * of Mr. Milnes, the eleve of our Univerſity, whoſe public conduct does honour to himſelf, and credit to the place of his education. May I requeſt that, when you have an opportunity, you will offer him my reſpectful compliments.

I am, Rev. Sir, with much eſteem,
Your humble ſervant,
JOHN MILLAR.

LETTER V.

From PROFESSOR MILLAR *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

YOU would think it ſtrange that you have not heard from me ſooner in relation to the publication of your Pamphlet. I found it neceſſary, after all, to give up Mr. X. Z, who, as frequently happens, was much farther in arrear with his Creditors than he at firſt pretended, and therefore was unable to make out his agreement with me. It was therefore neceſſary to make application in ſome other quarter; and I have at length made an agreement with a Bookſeller in Edinburgh, who undertakes to circulate the Pamphlet. This is A. B, to whom I yeſterday ſent off the copies. He ſays that as this is a third edition,

* No copy of the Editor's letter here alluded to by Mr. Millar, or of his letters to the worthy Profeſſor of a ſubſequent date, has been preſerved.

and

and as the queſtion has become a little obſolete, we cannot expect a rapid ſale. To be ſure the doctrine derives no ſupport from the conduct of ſeveral Oppoſition Members, though it is not the leſs well founded. Be ſo good as to accept of my thanks for the copies, which have been committed to my diſtribution, and for the three Volumes of Political Papers, which I conſider as a valuable collection of the hiſtorical memorials of the times, and which reflects ſo much credit upon the perſon from whom I have had the honour of receiving it. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt faithful ſervant,

JOHN MILLAR.

COLLEGE, GLASGOW,
8th of Jan. 1801.

LETTER VI.

From PROFESSOR MILLAR *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

YOUR letter of the 2d of February I have duly received, as alſo the 25 copies of your Pamphlet, which I ſhall diſtribute when I think they will be moſt uſeful. With regard to what you are pleaſed to call my trouble in diſtributing them, I think I need ſay no more than that I look upon promoting your views in this particular as intimately connected with the public intereſt, and that my perfect conviction of the principles from which

which you act will give me a ſtrong inclination to ſerve you on every occaſion where I may have it in my power. What you mention concerning the ſentiments of your great County is highly intereſting, as it marks a diſpoſition to be rouzed from that lethargy which has ſo long prevailed over the Nation. I dare ſay the recent Miniſterial changes, at which we are all ſtaring and wondering in this part of the Country, will make no alteration in your proceedings. There is one piece of management on the part of Miniſters of which I have long been apprehenſive. Thoſe who brought us into this War certainly wiſh to get out of the ſcrape, and if the Nation can be induced to expreſs a ſtrong deſire of Peace, they will make a merit of complying with the voice of the Public, and, throwing the blame of the terms upon the People, will continue in their offices, and keep up the military eſtabliſhment, at leaſt ſuch a part of it as will be ſufficient to ſuppreſs the general inclinations of the Country. The diſplacing of Miniſters, whether old or new, (for in this reſpect they are the ſame) ought to be held up as the radical meaſure, without which it will be impoſſible to obtain a tolerable Peace, and any Peace whatever will be merely an armiſtice, to laſt no longer than till our ſores have been a little plaſtered up. If we expect a permanent Peace, we muſt begin with committing the Adminiſtration to men who were always Enemies to the War, and in whom upon that account, our enemies will have confidence to believe that no juggle is intend-

ed,

ed. I ſee by the Papers that the Petition from Leeds is to be preſented by Mr. Wilberforce. I hope your County will conſider how far it is proper to commit their Petition either to the County Members, or to any other Members of Parliament. Would it not have a better effect to ſend Delegates of your own? Theſe would be more under your direction, and, if properly choſen, would have more weight. At the ſame time, if other Counties follow your example, their reſpective Delegates might confer together, and would have a chance to make the voice of the Nation more diſtinctly heard. This latter conſideration, though it ſeems the moſt important, needed not be taken notice of, for the former is abundantly ſufficient to recommend the meaſure. This change of Miniſtry will have no tendency to diſcourage the Petions which might otherwiſe have been intended. For whatever may be the cauſe of it, there can be no doubt that it proceeds from ſome exaraordinary embarraſſment which tends to produce diſunion and weakneſs. It is probable that a ſhort time will clear up theſe myſteries, which at preſent are involved in darkneſs, and enable the Friends of Liberty to diſcover the preciſe ground upon which they ſtand. I am, with the higheſt eſteem,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt faithful ſervant,

JOHN MILLAR.

COLLEGE, GLASGOW *,
20*th*, *Feb.* 1801.

* Soon after the date of this letter, Profeſſor John Millar died, as the Editor was informed, of an inflammation on his breaſt. By this

this unfortunate and unexpected event his family and his friends were deprived of an amiable and respectable man in all the relations of private life; his Pupils loft an able and benevolent Inftructor; and his Country a Patriot at once difintereſted, prudent and zealous. He was eminently ſkilled in the Hiſtory and Antiquities of our Saxon Progenitors; and it may be truly affirmed, that no Political Philoſopher of his age and country underſtood their principles of Government better than Profeſſor Millar. Of this aſſertion a ſufficient proof may be found in his Hiſtorical View of the Engliſh Government. His conduct in times truly dangerous to the upright Patriot proved that his attachment to their principles equalled his knowledge.

NUMBER

NUMBER XX.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with ſeveral* Friends, *reſpecting a* Meeting *preparatory to a* General Meeting *of the* County *of* York, *to be held about the end of the year* 1800.

Extract *of* LETTER I.

From THOMAS BIGGE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *Oct. 19th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

OUR political proſpects lowr with unuſual gloom. Hoſtility from the North, the apprehenſion of it from America, the exiſtence of Scarcity confirmed by Government authority, the impoſſibility of our receiving adequate ſupplies from abroad, and the certainty of our not obtaining from our preſent Miniſtry a Peace with France, (the only remedy for preſent, and preventative againſt future and aggravated diſtreſs) conſtitute a caſe of national danger which one cannot contemplate without extreme anxiety for the ultimate event.

In this ſtate of things, is there no hope that Yorkſhire may be rouzed to efforts which,

which, by inſpiring the reſt of the Country with ſpirit and confidence, may ſave the Nation? Will a Ruſſian War produce no change in Hull and the other Sea-ports? And can no effect upon the Weſt-Riding be hoped for from our threatened excluſion from the Continent? Wretched as the proſpect is, I can yet hardly venture to predict that our infatuated Countrymen will be brought to view it in its true light.*

All here deſire to be particularly remembered to the Family at Burton, with,

Dear Sir,

Your's ever moſt truly,

THO. BIGGE.

* This letter of his excellent Friend from the place whence it was dated, may be probably concluded to have conveyed both his own ſentiments and thoſe of Dr. Fenwick; and the Editor gladly avails himſelf of his Friend's permiſſion to publiſh it, becauſe, in truth, it was the exciting cauſe which occaſioned the correſpondence of this and the ſucceeding Number, and the Editor's laſt attempt to effect a General Meeting of the County of York on principles favourable at once to Peace and Conſtitutional Liberty. In 1795, the great majority of the Merchants, the Landed Gentry, and the Nobility of that County had been alarmed out of their uſual ſentiments of Liberty, partly by the art of the Miniſter, partly by the raſhneſs of ſome Popular Meetings; and had reſiſted, with the utmoſt vehemence, and compleatly defeated the attempt which was made near the cloſe of that year to preſerve the Bill of Rights, and the ancient privileges of the Nation unviolated by the meaſures then depending in Parliament. In the years 1797 and 1798, repeated attempts had been again made to rouze the County to its accuſtomed feelings; the War had been conducted with an unexampled profuſion of expence, and though our naval operations had been ſucceſsful, yet the great object of our efforts upon the Continent had been unattained, and probably was unattainable. The dangerous ſituation of Ireland, the difficulties of this Country, and the proſpect of an increaſing preſſure of taxation, which was already diſtreſſing to the whole Community, had then produced a ſtrong diſpoſition to Peace; yet in circumſtances thus apparently favourable, the attempt to bring back Yorkſhire to its accuſtomed zeal for Liberty had failed of ſucceſs; it had been found impracticable to collect the great Body of its Freeholders, with a proſpect of union on the ſubject of Conſtitutional

tional Abuſes, at leaſt to any ſufficient extent to be uſeful to the Cauſe of Freedom. At the ſubſequent period, when the letter of Mr. Bigge was written, the Nation had experienced that increaſe of its dangers and diſtreſſes which had been predicted in the years 1797 and 1798, and was placed in a ſituation of peril far greater than it had experienced for many centuries before.

If the infatuation of the Public were not too inveterate to be cured by adverſity, if the Nation were not already loſt in the ſlavery of the mind, it was preſumable at that juncture, that the Peop e would be diſpoſed again to liſten to the doctrines of Peace and Liberty, and would renounce the prejudices and unreaſonable alarms which had betrayed them into a criſis of ſuch extreme peril. The experiment ought to have been made; and it was made in Yorkſhire, but too imperfectly to decide what its reſult would have been, if circumſtances had not ariſen to prevent the projected Aſſembly of the County. During the courſe of the Correſpondence which was commenced with theſe views in Yorkſhire, a new ſyſtem of foreign policy was adopted by the Court; the War-Miniſter, accompanied by ſome of his friends, retired from office, and a new Adminiſtration was formed of men who had uniformly concurred in his meaſures, but now profeſſed that pacific diſpoſition which he was little inclined, perhaps, to aſſume, or aſſuming, was little fitted to negociate that Peace which the Court now thought neceſſary. On the firſt rumour of a change in the ſyſtem of the Court, it was evident that the intended movement in Yorkſhire muſt be ſuſpended. It ſoon appeared that the reported change was true; a Negociation for Peace was commenced; and in a few months the Preliminaries were ſigned; and though by them neither the honour of the Nation was maintained, nor its ſafety eſtabliſhed, though not one of the profeſſed objects of the War was accompliſhed, and even the duration of Peace for a few years on terms ſo unſatisfactory, was improbable, yet was the ceſſation of hoſtilities received with tranſport by the Nation: its deareſt wiſh was ſatisfied; and the immenſe expenditure of the War and the proportionable increaſe of the public burthens, the ſacrifice of ſo many lives, the ruin of our comfort to ſo great an extent, the vaſt accumulation of Power and Patronage to the Crown, and, above all, the pernicious precedents by which the Rights of the Community had been ſo greatly endangered during the late Adminiſtration, were all forgotten or forgiven; and the proſpect of a return of the ancient zeal of the Nation for its Conſtitutional Liberty was thrown to an indefinite diſtance.

LETTER

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Oct.* 21*ſt*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

THE diſtreſs and danger of our ſituation are evidently increaſing; the alarm is becoming general, and the ſentiments of the Nation are inclining more and more decidedly to pacific meaſures, and a change of Adminiſtration. The Miniſter appears to have loſt his hold on the Corporation of London, and the Merchants of Leeds; the Corporation remonſtrates intelligibly enough againſt the War, and the murmurs of the Weſt-Riding are diſtinctly heard at this diſtance. In theſe circumſtances, if you approve a Private Meeting of a few Gentlemen at York, to conſult with our friends there on the propriety of ſome preparatory ſtep towards obtaining a County Meeting, I ſhould be very glad to come over for a couple of nights, ſo as to have one whole day to diſcourſe together, to conſider what can be done, and to concert the beſt means of doing it.

I think the beginning of November would be ſufficiently early for ſuch a private conſultation; and as I ſhall ſend a duplicate of this lettter to Mr. R. Milnes, Sir T. Gaſcoigne, Sir W. Milner, Mr. Wilſon, and Mr. Fawkes, I think it will ſave trouble if I ſhould propoſe that the 10th and 11th of November be the two days for this conſultation. Thoſe

Gentlemen

Gentlemen who cannot conveniently be at York on the 10th of November will yet be able, perhaps, to attend at Ringroſe's Tavern about noon the next day, and will, I hope, ſpend the reſt of that day chiefly together, and particularly dine together at that Tavern.

I will only add that I have ventured to take this liberty of propoſing a Private Meeting of a few friends, in conſequence of the earneſt wiſh which has been expreſſed to me by ſome of our reſpectable friends in the North, that Yorkſhire would come forward on the preſent critical emergency.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Moſt truly your's,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

My Dear Sir,

I AM at a loſs to conceive what device the Miniſter will have recourſe to, at the Meeting, to induce thoſe who have any ſtake in the Country to go along with him in the further proſecution of this diſaſtrous War. Nothing but his ſucceſs on former occaſions, in oppoſition to every ſentiment that ought to have influenced the minds of men, can make one believe for a moment, that it is poſſible he can meet with his uſual ſupport, even in

Parliament. The Country muſt now feel the truth of all we have told them, and muſt experience the full preſſure of thoſe evils which we have always ſtated to be the neceſſary and unavoidable conſequences of a falſe ſyſtem of politics. I ſhall with great pleaſure meet our friends at York on the 10th. It is my opinion, that whatever may be the pertinacity with which the Friends of the War adhere to a ruinous ſyſtem, it is our duty to meet from time to time, and not to be diſmayed, even though the Miniſter ſhould by ſome new quackery again perſuade the People, that War and Famine are bleſſings, and that he is the Saviour of his Country.

I am, dear Sir, with great truth,
Your's ſincerely,
WILLIAM WRIGHTSON.

CUSWORTH, *Oct.* 23*d*, 1800.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* EARL STANHOPE.

PURTON-HALL, *October* 25*th*, 1800.

My Dear Lord,

AT laſt I have the pleaſure to ſay to your Lordſhip, the time we have long wiſhed is come; England begins to feel as it ought. Under this perſuaſion, a Private Meeting of our friends is propoſed to be held at York on the 10th and 11th of November; and I have little doubt that a County Meeting will

will be the conſequence. Yet this is by no means to be conſidered as certain; ſtill leſs is it certain that it will be in our power, or will be adviſable to call a General Meeting before the end of December. It is even not improbable, that we may find it expedient to defer calling the County of York together till the middle or the end of January. As ſoon as this point can be aſcertained, your Lordſhip ſhall immediately be informed; and I think it likely that at the intended conference on the 11th of November, the plan of the Yorkſhire Gentlemen will be formed. It is, as I formely obſerved to your Lordſhip, of the greateſt moment, that the popular meaſure ſhould be well combined, and the movement of the Counties general. The ſpirit of the People muſt be rouzed, and burſt out at once, in oppoſition nearly unanimous, or nothing can be done to ſave the Country.

In times like theſe, however, it is but a neceſſary precaution to ſtate explicitly that the oppoſition to which I wiſh the People to be rouzed, is a regular and legal oppoſition: and if the Attorney General ſhould ſee this letter before your Lordſhip, I ſay to him, *this and this only* is the oppoſition I wiſh to be excited. I hope your Lordſhip is in good health and ſpirits, and *now happy* in the concurrent ſentiments of *all* who are moſt dear to you *. So hopes and wiſhes

Your Lordſhip's faithful friend,

C. WYVILL.

* The Editor truſts that the ſubject which is alluded to in this paſſage may hereafter receive a full explanation. But the preſent is not the proper time for it; and if it were, this is not the proper place for its appearance.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* EARL STANHOPE.

BURTON-HALL, *Oct.* 27, 1800.

My Dear Lord,

ON the 25th inſtant I had received a ſpirited anſwer from Mr. Wrightſon. I fear that in conſequence of it I may have written too ſanguinely to your Lordſhip. Six letters remain unanſwered. I mention this circumſtance to prevent your miſconceiving our ſituation in Yorkſhire, which, though much improved, is yet not ſuch that I can venture to ſay my journey on the 10th of November will produce any conſequence. I ſtill hope the beſt; but all is uncertain; and I ſhould be very ſorry if any warm expreſſion in my letter of the 25th inſtant ſhould be miſunderſtood, and lead your Lordſhip into any meaſure which may be found to be premature.

I am, my Dear Lord,

Ever moſt faithfully your's,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Esq.

BURTON-HALL, *Nov.* 18, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

FINDING Mr. Strickland and other friends in York did not approve the propoſed Private Meeting at York of a few Gentlemen out of the Country, I have written to him this morning, the letter of which you have a copy on the other ſide; and I hope you, Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Fawkes will approve what I have done. I own it appears to me that they carry their ideas of caution too far; and I cannot conceive it to be conſiſtent with true manly dignity of character that we ſhould very long abſtain from a Private Meeting on the reaſons aſſigned by Mr. Strickland, though I believe a ſhort delay will have no bad conſequence. I muſt own frankly, my dear Sir, that my heart goes along with what you ſo forcibly ſay in yours of the 23d of October. Acting from views of duty, I am not diſcouraged by our former repulſes; but, like yourſelf, am willing to ſtand forward on the firſt opening of a reaſonable proſpect of ſucceſs. And ſhould you, and Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Fawkes in the courſe of two or three weeks ſee reaſon to think that we ought to get together, and avail ourſelves of the preſent feelings of diſtreſs, and the change of ſentiment viſibly taking place in conſequence of it, I ſhall with

great pleaſure obey your ſummons, and meet you at York privately.

The preſent difficulties and diſtreſſes are ſo ſeverely and ſo extenſively felt, that I fully expect they will produce in the courſe of this winter a general wiſh for the change of men and meaſures. I am ſatisfied nothing elſe can ſave us; and conſequently that we ought not to let this winter paſs away without endeavouring to aſſemble the County of York.

I am, with cordial regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's moſt truly,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER VII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM STRICKLAND, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Nov.* 18, 1800.

Dear Sir,

LAST night, on my return from Sellaby, I received your's of the 28th of October, and am ſorry to find, that, as far as you are able to judge, there is little or no encouragement in Yorkſhire from any change of ſentiment that has yet taken place. If you are right in your objection even to ſo private a Meeting as has been propoſed, the Gentlemen of this Country (in the language of Mr. Fox) have been terribly ſubdued indeed; and deſpondence is much more rational than I have been accuſtomed to think it. But, even ſhould I ſup-

I ſuppoſe that you and our friends, Meſſrs. Carr and Sinclair, are miſtaken in your apprehenſion of miſchief from a private conference of half a dozen of our friends at York, I ſhould feel no heſitation in complying with your diſſuaſion. I mean, therefore, to inform Mr. Wrightſon, Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Fawkes immediately, that I no longer wiſh them to take the trouble of a journey to York on the 10th inſt. but to wait a little longer for a more deciſive change of ſentiment, and a diſpoſition to proceed with that zeal and ſpirit, which, if pretty general in Yorkſhire, may give us a good proſpect of ſucceſs.

I am aware that the times require great caution, and have ſome reaſon to believe, not only that ſtrong prejudices are entertained againſt all who are known to be zealous Friends of Liberty, but that every effort will be made to ruin them in the opinion of the Country, whenever they may attempt to obtain a declaration of this Country againſt the preſent ſyſtem of Adminiſtration.

I only beg leave to add, that if caution is neceſſary, firmneſs, and vigour, and activity are not leſs ſo. A little procraſtination probably will do no harm; but I hope we ſhall avoid going too far in that courſe, and ſhall remember that neither principles nor the feelings of duty ought to be ſacrificed to the vain expectation of ſoftening irreconcileable enemies. I am,

Dear Sir,

With moſt ſincere regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. I ſee with pleaſure that the Popular Spirit is riſing in Middleſex. I believe you will ſoon ſee reaſon to judge more favourably of the diſpoſition of the great majority in Yorkſhire.

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to* Richard Slater Milnes, Eſq; M. P.

Burton-Hall, *Nov.* 1*ſt*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

AS our friends in York think the propoſed Private Meeting may do harm, and ſtrongly wiſh it to be poſtponed, I thought it beſt to agree to do ſo. And I ſend you the copy of my letter to Mr. Strickland to that effect on the other half ſheet.

They appear to be more diſcouraged than I can ſee any ſufficient reaſon for; but I hope a few weeks may alter the ſtate of affairs and opinions ſo decidedly as to give them freſh ſpirits; and it ſeems expedient therefore to wait for ſuch a change.

I never thought it adviſable to proceed to a call of the County immediately, but only to meet in order to conſult together, and endeavour to feel our way, which in our diſperſed ſtate it is difficult to do. Whenever you and Mr. Wrightſon are of opinion that ſuch a change of ſentiment as I allude to has taken place, I ſhall be very glad to obey your ſummons. I had not ſeen the Sheffield Addreſs

and

and am ſurpriſed at the contents. I ſuppoſe it muſt have come from a few of the Merchants, and not from a Town Meeting.

My beſt wiſhes attend you and your's.

I am, Dear Sir,
With moſt cordial regard,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER IX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WALTER FAWKES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Nov. 18*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

FINDING Mr. Strickland and other friends of ours at York are averſe from the propoſed Private Meeting on the 10th and 11th inſtant, I have written to our friends, Mr. Wrightſon and Mr. R. Milnes, to inform them of the objection, and that I do not wiſh to give them the trouble of attending; and I loſe no time to ſay it to yourſelf. I cannot however ſend you this information without adding at the ſame time my opinion; and it is much confirmed by what paſſed at the late Middleſex Meeting, that it will not be prudent to procraſtinate, and diſcourage our friends by too long poſtponing to get together, and to take ſome preparatory ſteps towards a County Meeting. The times undoubtedly require caution; but they require firmneſs, vigour, and activity at leaſt as much.

It

It were in vain to endeavour to ſoften our irreconcileable enemies; the hope is ſure to be diſappointed, unleſs we are prepared to ſacrifice our principles and conſiſtency of conduct to their prejudices, which is a price for their co-operation never to be paid, I hope, by thoſe who act with us.

Should you, Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Wrightſon ſee reaſon about the middle or end of November to wiſh to renew the propoſal for a Private Previous Meeting of a few, I ſhall be happy to attend your ſummons.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Moſt ſincerely your's,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER X.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *Nov. 10th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

MR. Bigge received your letter before he left Durham. I believe he concurred with me in thinking you were more ſanguine than the ſtate of the public mind warranted; but you who know how deſpondent we have long been in politics will neither be ſurpriſed nor diſcouraged by our opinion. In the meaſures you have ſince taken, there can be no danger; no evil can ariſe from them, and they may be productive of good. If the Nation ſhould open its eyes to the dangers which ſurround them, and to the inroads made on their Conſtitutional

Conſtitutional Rights, you will be able to act more immediately, and with greater deciſion from having previouſly aſcertained each other's opinions, and concerted your line of conduct; and even ſhould the deluſion continue in force, your Meeting will have the good effect of animating the leſs active part of thoſe who concur with you in opinion. Few men preſerve their public principles in full force, unleſs they are occaſionally called upon to act up to them; and there lies the great danger of our long-continued inaction. But although I feel this very ſtrongly, I no leſs approve of your caution in refraining from attempting an immediate call of the County; for though inactivity be very dangerous, it is not more ſo than unſucceſsful efforts would be. How difficult is it to ſteer between theſe extremes, and while we deliberate on the meaſures to be purſued, how rapidly are our Rulers hurrying us to the point when the utmoſt ſtretch of Political Wiſdom will be unequal to the Preſervation of our Conſtitution.

The ſtate of the manufactories here is as bad as it can be with you. The bulk of the workmen have been diſcharged, and the poor rates are ſwelled beyond all precedent, as well by the numbers relieved, as by the increaſed allowance which the high prices of the neceſſaries of life have rendered neceſſary. The ſhop-keepers complain alſo of diminiſhed trade, and increaſing book debts; in ſhort, a general gloom has overſpread the productive claſſes of the Community, and the opening of

the ſevere ſeaſon of the year is viewed with general dread. That Peace is anxiouſly wiſhed for, I have no doubt, but there are too many who are not ſufficiently convinced that our Miniſters are the greateſt obſtacles to its return. They are inclined to believe that our ſafety requires us to retain ſome of our moſt important conqueſts, and are moreover ready to join the Premier and his adherents in their aſſertions of the inſincerity of France. In ſhort, the public mind is irritated, but not enlightened.

Mrs. Fenwick joins in all that is friendly to you and your family.

Your's very ſincerely,

J. R. FENWICK.

P. S. No appearance of your letter being opened.

LETTER XI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Dec.* 1*ſt*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

THE more I inquire of the ſtate and temper of the Country, and the more I meditate on the information received, I am the more fully convinced that we ought ſoon to get together, if we ever mean to make one legal effort more to ſerve and to ſave our Country. To wait, as one of our worthieſt friends adviſes, till other Counties take the lead, or till other

other men in our own County come forward before us, can only tend to diſpirit our Countrymen everywhere, to retard our movement till it will be made too late, and to put into other hands the conduct of the buſineſs; into the hands of men who will, we may be certain, dwarf our meaſures, and render them utterly uſeleſs to the great end we have in view. I am ſtrongly perſuaded that Mr. Pitt will diſſolve the Imperial Parliament, after as ſhort a Seſſion as he can make it; and unleſs we are able to make ſome impreſſion on the public mind in favour of a change of ſyſtem, before the expected Diſſolution, he will be able to return nearly the ſame ſervile crew who compoſe the great Majority of this Parliament. The conſequence of having a Parliament ſubſtantially the ſame as the preſent returned for ſeven years more, will be as fatal to the Conſtitution as it is obvious and unavoidable. If you agree with me in this opinion, as I very much hope you will, and as I have found ſome of thoſe friends agree whom we moſt highly eſteem, I think there is no difficulty in determining that an attempt ought to be made this winter to move the Counties, beginning with our own. My recommendation therefore is, that you and our other principal friends would now come forward. I think we ſhould act with the greateſt advantage by calling a Meeting of Friends to the Requiſition on or about Tueſday the 30th of December, with a purpoſe to ſign at that Meeting a Requiſition to the Sheriff; who will, I hope, have no objection to name ſome

day

day after the 19th of January, and before the 26th of that month. If you approve theſe ideas, I will with pleaſure meet you at Wetherby, at Fryſton, or at York, if you think it neceſſary, on Thurſday the 11th of December, ſo that an advertiſement for the purpoſe may appear in the York Herald of the 13th inſtant: or if you think you can ſpare me that trouble, as I am rather fearful of winter journies, you will perhaps inſert ſuch an advertiſement on your own authority, (as you were empowered to do at the laſt Meeting) after conſulting with our excellent friend at Fryſton, and other friends in your neighbourhood. I ſhall ſend by this poſt a copy of this letter to Mr. Milnes, and ſhall be ready to do, reſpecting what is here propoſed, as you and he may determine.

I beg my beſt reſpects to Mrs. Wrightſon, and with every good wiſh to you and your family, I remain,

Dear Sir,
With cordial regard,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

My Dear Mr. Milnes,

THE above letter to our friend at Cuſworth will be ſent to-day. I really thought not to have written again on the ſubject; but

but rather to have waited the ſummons of yourſelf and Mr. Wrightſon; but though no harm has yet reſulted from our delay, I am fully ſatisfied that we have no time to loſe now. I alſo have little or no doubt, that we ſhall meet with a ſupport beyond what many expect. But if you and our friend have any doubts, I will with pleaſure come over to Fryſton, though age and infirmity incline me to ſtay at home in winter, if ſuch a journey can be diſpenſed with.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Moſt cordially your's,

C. WYVILL.

BURTON-HALL, *Dec.* 1, 1800.

LETTER XIII.

From WM. WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

My Dear Sir,

I Delayed anſwering your letter till I had informed myſelf if there was any change in the ſentiments of thoſe Gentlemen who have been the ſteady ſupporters of the meaſures of Adminiſtration in the populous parts of this County. I am ſorry to ſay there is none. I am convinced they would all unite againſt us with the ſame force they did in 1795. The diſpoſition to Peace is manifeſt; but the Miniſter is ſtill the Idol, and they will hear of no attempts at Negociation but through

through him. All our beſt friends in this part of the County ſeem to think that nothing ought to be attempted at this time, as there is no fair ground of hope that we ſhould meet in any degree of ſtrength, and that our Meeting would only ſerve to render our enemies more pertinacious, and leſs willing to become converts to a more rational ſyſtem of policy. Under theſe circumſtances we muſt ſubmit to wait till our friends think it adviſable to take ſome active ſtep.

It is with much regret I convey to you this diſcouraging ſtatement of facts; but I have no doubt it is as I ſtate it to be. In hopes of better times, I remain,

With great regard,

Your's truly,

WILLIAM WRIGHTSON.

CUSWORTH, *Dec. 4th*, 1800.

LETTER XIV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM STRICKLAND, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Dec. 11th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

WERE I as able to bear fatigue and the cold of a winter journey as I was in the year 1780, I ſhould not have remained ſo long at Burton in a criſis ſo threatening to the Country as the preſent, without having actually ſeen and conferred with you, or at leaſt attempted it by going to York. But the uſual inconveniences of age begin to warn me

me that I muſt be cautious, and that in a ſhort time I muſt abſtain from both Public and Private Meetings altogether. When that time is come, my heart and ſincereſt wiſhes will go with you and our other younger friends in your honourable exertions; and ſometimes, when reduced to be a mere ſpectator of your ſtruggle to ſupport the Conſtitution by means itſelf affords, I may yet venture, like a ſort of Chamber-Counſel in Politics, to throw out a hint for your conſideration.

Should a County Meeting, or a Previous one, be called this winter, I hope and intend to be at it. Yet, for reaſons alluded to, having juſt now declined accepting a very kind invitation of our friend at Fryſton, to meet Mr. Wrightſon there near Chriſtmas, I feel that in writing this letter I ſhall appear in ſome meaſure to act in the character I have mentioned.

I think then that no diſadvantage to the cauſe has yet been incurred by delay. I always looked to an Auſtrian Peace with France as the event which would form the proper juncture for Popular Meetings. Though put off, probably, by the artifice of our Cabinet, it ſeems likely ſoon to be concluded. Recent circumſtances ſeem to ſhow that it is unavoidable. We may expect by every poſt to hear, if not that Preliminaries are ſigned, ſome intelligence from Luneville, that their ſignature is ſure to take place very ſhortly. Should this event happen in the courſe of December, there would be time for a Meeting before

February. And my reaſons for thinking that a Previous Meeting ſhould be held immediately after the Auſtrian Peace is known in England, are theſe: I mean a Previous Meeting, publicly advertiſed, with a view to ſign a Requiſition to the Sheriff to call a Meeting of the County. I ſtrongly ſuſpect, that if no Meetings are held this winter in oppoſition to the Miniſter and his meaſures, he will diſſolve the Parliament in the ſpring, or early in the enſuing ſummer. And a General Election carried at a time when nothing had been publicly done to animate the People, and unite them in defence of the Conſtitution, would probably enable him to re-elect almoſt all the preſent Supporters of his Adminiſtration. I leave you to judge whether any thing ſhort of abſolute ruin to the Conſtitution can be expected from a Parliament ſubſtantially the ſame as the preſent, returned for a ſeven years duration.

A ſimilar conſequence, or one as fatal, might be expected, were the Popular Party to keep back, waiting till the Friends of the Miniſters may chooſe to come forward. In that caſe, the Miniſter's Friends may keep back at the Miniſter's deſire, till the proper time is come for a diſſolution; and then the above fatal effect will follow. Or it may ſuit his ſchemes to treat for a Peace with France, (no matter whether ſincerely or not) and in that caſe, by leaving the buſineſs to be managed by Mr. Wilberforce and his Friends, at a Meeting called by them, the Friends of their Country will find that they have given

up

up every meaſure they could have wiſhed to introduce.

To obviate all theſe dangers, and do what in the circumſtances may be poſſible, I would recommend a Previous Meeting to be held as ſoon as the ſeparate Peace of Auſtria is known. You will thus know your ſtrength, and may aſcertain whether a Petition for a Change of Men and Meaſures can be carried with a proper ſuperiority; or, if that probably could not be ſo carried, whether a Petition for Peace, as the next beſt meaſure, might not be carried even with a very great ſuperiority; and, poſſibly with it, Reſolutions ſuch as we could wiſh; or at leaſt that the Petition itſelf, worded to our own minds, might ſo be carried.

I have now done what I feel to be my duty; and I leave it to you, my good friend, to conſider theſe thoughts of mine, and do with them as on your own mature conſideration, or on conſultation with any friends, you may judge beſt.

I always rely with implicit confidence on your public ſpirit, and your enlightened attachment to the cauſe of Liberty; and not leſs on your conſtant friendly regard to me.

I am, with the ſame cordial regard to you,

Dear Sir,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* RICHARD SLATER MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Dec.* 13*th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

I AM not wholly diſcouraged by the adverſe ſtate of opinions in the Weſt of Yorkſhire. I do not expect our leading Adverſaries will be drawn by any degree of public diſtreſs to own that they have been wrong, or to concur in any meaſure tending to diſplace Mr Pitt, and bring Mr. Fox into Power. I ſtill have hopes, however, that in the courſe of this winter we may come forward with ſucceſs, though I have no doubt that your information is accurate reſpecting the adherence of the Merchants at Leeds to the preſent Miniſter.

The event which I have always looked to as forming the proper juncture for Popular Meetings, is an Auſtrian Peace with France. By the artifices of our Cabinet, probably that event has been retarded beyond our expectation. But recent circumſtances ſeem to render a ſeparate Peace between the Powers of Germany and France almoſt unavoidable, or at leaſt highly probable. We may expect very ſoon to hear that Preliminaries are ſigned at Luneville, or ſome other information which may evidently ſhow that an agreement may be depended on. Suppoſe that event to have happened, or that an agreement is aſcertained, I think the ſituation of the

the Country will be ſuch as to render it ſafe to call a County Meeting. Becauſe, if it ſhould then appear that a queſtion for a Petition, aſking a change of Miniſters, could not be carried with a proper ſuperiority, there ſeems no reaſon to doubt that a Petition for Peace alone might be ſo carried. It is evident that on that ſubject we ſhould have the concurring opinion and good wiſhes of the whole Country, except only thoſe who by intereſt, or zeal for high and arbitrary principles of Government, muſt be conſidered as too ſtrongly biaſſed againſt us, ever to join with us in any political meaſure. Such men exiſted in 1780. They were probably as numerous, or nearly ſo, as at preſent; but finding we had then the ſenſe of the Country with us, they durſt not give us, at that time, any public oppoſition. The ſame event may probably happen now. Deſerted by Auſtria, and attacked by France on one ſide, and by the Northern Powers on the other, the Nation muſt feel not only that Peace is neceſſary, but, probably alſo, that the miſconduct of Miniſters has been too long endured. Suppoſe this not to be the opinion of Yorkſhire at the moment of a County Meeting, we are ſure that the neceſſity of Peace muſt be allowed by all, in the conjuncture alluded to. And it ſeems equally certain, that a Petition from Yorkſhire for Peace will be a conſiderable point gained; far better, no doubt, than our remaining in ſilent acquieſcence.

But if our Friends ſeem to think it will be good policy to wait till other perſons, hitherto

friendly to Miniſters, may chooſe to come forward. To this I beg leave to ſtate my objections.

I conceive it very poſſible that the perſons in queſtion may defer their movement, either influenced directly or indirectly by the Miniſter, for a conſiderable time, ſo as to give him the opportunity which I ſtrongly ſuſpect he is waiting to ſeize, when the buſineſs of the ſupplies being over, and no impreſſion againſt him having been made by County Meetings, he may ſafely diſſolve the Parliament, and return the ſame ſervile majority, with few or no exceptions. I leave you to judge what elſe but ruin to Public Liberty could be expected from a Parliament ſubſtantially the ſame as the preſent, re-elected for a period of ſeven years.

On the other hand, in a ſituation ſo critical, and with the wiſh of the Public ſo certainly known as it is at preſent for Peace, it is not improbable that Mr. Pitt may think fit to renew the Negociation with France. It matters not whether he is ſincere or not in treating anew for Peace. It is obvious enough, that were that to be his ſcheme, there is nothing he would more wiſh than that Mr. Wilberforce and his Friends in Yorkſhire ſhould give him the ground he wants to take, by getting Petitions from the County, as well as from Leeds, &c. This would be the game he would play here and every where elſe; and then the fatal conſequence above-mentioned would be brought on, in ſomewhat a different way, but with

equal

equal effect. Whereas on this very ſuppoſition, ſhould we get the ſtart of him, we might carry Petitions worded according to *our views*, and ſo as effectually to defeat *his*; and poſſibly procure the Petition of the County to be accompanied with ſome popular Reſolutions ſtill more advantageous.

Upon the whole, I ſee no good reaſon why we ſhould not ſeize the opportunity of the ſeparate Peace alluded to, and immediately call, by public advertiſement, a Previous Meeting of our Friends, with a view to hold a County Meeting for the purpoſe of petitioning the Throne either for a change of Miniſters, if that ſhall appear feaſible at the time, or if not, for Peace alone.

I have mentioned theſe ideas to our friend Mr. Peirſe, and alſo to ſeveral other Gentlemen in this neighbourhood who are among the moſt conſiderable of our Party, and I find they concur with me in opinion. I have alſo ſtated them to Mr. Strickland, and mean to write to our friend at Cuſworth on the ſubject immediately. I do not think of troubling any more of our friends with my ſentiments. Peirſe, Scroope, &c. approve, and will co-operate. If yourſelf, and Strickland, and Wrightſon ſee the matter in the ſame light as is here repreſented, I ſhall be perfectly ſatisfied, and will then ſay, let us boldly puſh on, the moment a ſeparate Peace is known, and be preparing for it immediately. But if you and our two laſt-named friends ſtill ſhould have doubts, I own I have little more to ſay that is likely to remove them.

And now, my dear Sir, let me aſſure you that I have troubled you and them with my thoughts upon this ſubject ſolely from a ſenſe of duty. If the friends whom I ſo highly eſteem, and with whom I wiſh to act, or not to act, as may appear to them adviſable, ſhould ſtill think inactivity prudent, I ſhall moſt readily acquieſce. I am, in truth, from my time of life becoming daily more diſpoſed to acquieſcence, and with your opinions in favour of inactivity, after I have ſtated mine againſt it, I ſhall reſt fully ſatisfied. I am,

Dear Sir,
With moſt cordial regard,
Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. From the foreign intelligence of this day's poſt, affairs may be thought to wear a hoſtile appearance. Yet as the Armiſtice has been prolonged for ſix days, that is, to the 28th of November, I ſtill think the reaſoning of this letter is applicable.—Should hoſtilities be actually commenced after the Armiſtice is expired, I own my opinion would be altered. But I do not expect it; and a few days will ſhow. *

* A ſimilar letter, with ſome ſlight variations, was ſent to W. Wrightſon, Eſq; on the 14th of December, 1800; to which his to the Editor of the 18th of that month, was Mr. Wrightſon's anſwer. It is the next letter of this ſeries.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

From WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

CUSWORTH, *Dec.* 18*th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

IF Auſtria ſhould make a ſeparate Peace, the probability of which is much increaſed ſince your letter of the 14th, and if any indignation ſhould ariſe in the breaſts of the Freeholders on that event, it certainly would be a favourable moment to make our appeal to the County. At preſent * I fear there is no fair ground of hope that the confidence of the County is withdrawn from Miniſters, though the zeal in their favour may be ſomewhat abated. In the year 1780 the Country breathed a different ſpirit, popular principles were held in high reſpect, that controul which the People ought to hold and exerciſe, was ſanctioned and ſupported, both in and out of Parliament, by a great majority of the King-

* In the opinion of his worthy friend here intimated, the Editor willingly acquieſced; and for a few weeks he forbore the proſecution of his deſign. But in the courſe of the next month, it became apparent from the reſolutions adopted by Public Meetings at Leeds, &c, in oppoſition to the wiſhes of the Contractors, and other decided Friends of the Miniſter, that his influence in the Weſt of Yorkſhire was very conſiderably diminiſhed. Of this the third and ſome ſubſequent Papers prefixed to this Volume exhibit a ſufficient proof. Encouraged by this manifeſt change of ſentiment in that populous part of the County, ſeveral reſpectable Gentlemen agreed to ſign an application to Mr. Wrightſon, requeſting him to call a Public Meeting, in purſuance of the power intruſted to him on the 7th of February, 1798, with a view to procure a General Meeting of the County of York. The next Number contains a ſeries of the moſt material letters which paſſed on this occaſion between the Editor and his friends.

dom;

dom; and the Miniſter, on the moſt important queſtion that has been agitated in modern times, was run within eighteen votes. If the reſult of a County Meeting is nothing more than the adoption of a Petition for Peace, worded by the Friends of Miniſtry, which muſt be the caſe if the majority be againſt us, *Cui Bono?*

Unleſs the numbers are with us, an amendment would be moved and carried in the ſame tone as if the County had been called together by Mr. Wilberforce or his Friends. In my opinion the whole we have to conſider is, whether we are ſure to carry our own meaſures, and not to call a County Meeting till that point is beyond diſpute. If it is the belief of our friends that we can do that now, or if the event of a ſeparate Peace, or the preſſure of new burthens, ſhould at any time induce them to think ſo, I ſhall be ready to concur in the opinions of thoſe for whoſe judgment and good intentions I have the higheſt reſpect. I am,

My Dear Sir,

With great regard,

Your's moſt faithfully,

WILLIAM WRIGHTSON.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXI.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with ſeveral* Yorkſhire Gentlemen *in the early part of the year* 1801, *with a view to promote a* Meeting *of the* County, *by a* Previous Meeting *to be called by* W. WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

LETTER I.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOHN HUTTON, Eſq; *and other* Gentlemen *in the* North Part *of* Yorkſhire.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 26th*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

LEEDS has petitioned for a ſpeedy Peace. The other Towns, I am aſſured, have ſimilar ſentiments. I preſume, therefore, that you agree with me in thinking that it is high time to take the neceſſary ſteps for procuring a Meeting of the County. And I requeſt the favour that by the return of the Poſt you will empower me to add your name to a Requiſition which will be ſigned in this neighbourhood, to deſire Mr. Wrightſon will call a Previous Meeting at Ringroſe's Tavern as ſoon as may be convenient, in order to make an immediate application to the High Sheriff

to

to call a Meeting of the County. Mr. Wrightſon * was intruſted with this power by the laſt Requiſition Meeting; and the application to him, and other ſteps to be taken before a County Meeting can be called, will neceſſarily conſume a good deal of time, on which account I hope you will excuſe the liberty I have taken to requeſt as ſpeedy an anſwer as poſſible. I am,

Dear Sir,

With great regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM STRICKLAND, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 29th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon, which is copied on the other ſide, has been ſigned by a few of my immediate neighbours,

* The laſt Requiſition Meeting was held on the 7th of February, 1798. Their Addreſs to the worthy Freeholders of Yorkſhire is the 22d of the Preliminary Papers prefixed to the 5th Volume of this Collection. Their Reſolutions were not publiſhed, as the Editor believes; but it is certain that their long-depending Requiſition was ſigned by the Gentlemen preſent, that a Committee was appointed to promote a more extenſive ſignature; and that the power to call a freſh Requiſition Meeting was then intruſted to Mr. Wrightſon, as it had been before intruſted to him by the Meeting held on the 3d day of Auguſt, 1797. The only Paper left in the poſſeſſion of the Chairman of the Committee, which is important enough to be publiſhed, is the Requiſition with the ſignatures either annexed at the Meeting on the 7th of February, 1798, or afterwards communicated to the Committee; which Paper has been obtained by the kindneſs of the reſpectable Friend alluded to, ſince the publication of the 5th Volume; and it is the firſt of the Preliminary Papers prefixed to this Volume.

will

will be ſigned by ſome other Gentlemen in a day or two, and will then be ſent to Mr. Wrightſon without delay. I therefore wiſh to ſend you a copy, and at the ſame time to add a few lines by way of explanation, or rather of apology, if you ſhould diſapprove this ſtep.

Since our late letters on the ſubject of a County Meeting, various events have occurred, which in a very great degree increaſe the danger of the Country, and in a particular manner diſtreſs the Trading Part of the Community. Leeds has petitioned for a ſpeedy Peace. And other Towns, I am aſſured, entertain ſimilar ſentiments, from having felt ſimilar diſtreſs. Some of theſe Towns are ready to petition, but delay it, only with a view to let this County hold a Meeting firſt. In ſhort, it is evident that the wiſh for Peace is general; and on this ſubject, at leaſt, we are ſure of a decided ſuperioty, if we ſhould not be able to carry a queſtion for the diſmiſſal of Miniſters at a County Meeting. In this ſtate of public affairs and public opinion I think it impoſſible that, holding a Previous Meeting, with a view to effect a Meeting of the County, can do harm; and therefore I have taken this ſtep to procure one. I know you look for this meaſure to originate with Landed Gentlemen, who have till now been our Opponents. But I think you may wait for their coming forward much longer than the dangerous ſituation of the Country, the daring character of the Miniſter, and the means he has of parrying our attacks, would render prudent. It

It is true, his friends in Leeds, or at leaſt ſeveral of them, appear to have deſerted him at their late Meeting; but that was the effect of great and almoſt intolerable diſtreſs in and about Leeds, which ſeems to have overcome their partiality to him, and their dread of thoſe whom they lately ſtiled Jacobins. But this is not to be expected from the Landed Intereſt, becauſe they are not diſtreſſed as the Manufacturing Intereſt are*; their Tenants are making fortunes; and they are raiſing their rents almoſt univerſally. We have now, therefore, as I judge, the beſt opportunity we are likely to have for moving the County within any time which it would be ſafe or prudent to wait for. Beſide theſe reaſons, it has great weight with me that I know Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey wiſh the meaſure to take place. I have had a good deal

* It is an obſervation which has been often repeated, and as often admitted without a queſtion, that wiſdom and virtue are to be found in a greater proportion in the middle than in any other claſs of our People. And it is almoſt as generally admitted that in the extenſive and diverſified range of that claſs, there is no body of men who from the advantages of education, their habits of life, and the uſual independence of their ſituation, poſſeſs ſo ſtrong a claim to the confidence of the Community in thoſe reſpects as the Gentry of England. At the criſis here brought back to our recollection, the Manufacturing Part of the Nation were inclined to Peace, by a very decided majority, while the Gentry manifeſted no great change of their political ſentiments, and ſeemed willing to ſuffer Miniſters to prolong the War, without expoſtulation. Undoubtedly the conduct of the mercantile claſſes, on this occaſion, was more conſonant with the true Intereſt of the Nation than that of the Country Gentlemen. At laſt, the Manufacturers, &c. did abandon the Miniſter they had ſo long admired, and did oppoſe the War they had ſo loudly ſupported; the change in their political ſentiments was fortunate for the Country; but it was not effected till the continuance of the War threatened their utter ruin, and the joint evils of beggary and famine

deal of correſpondence lately with Mr. Fox, and ſome with Mr. Grey upon the ſubject. They both ſeem anxious that this opportunity ſhould not be ſuffered to ſlip by; and both will do every thing in their power to procure us the aſſiſtance we want. On this head, I have letters of much importance, which I am very deſirous of ſhowing you. They will, I hope, ſatisfy you, if my reaſoning in this and former letters ſhould fail.

I will only add, that a letter which I received from Mr. Fox on Monday, was what determined me to make this attempt. He ſeems to think no time is to be loſt; and you know that was my opinion before. I heartily wiſh you may approve what I have done, and ſhall be happy, if you do, to hear it immediately. Of courſe this letter muſt be ſecret, except to the moſt confidential friends.

I am, with entire regard, Dear Sir,
Your's ever, C. WYVILL.

mine had ſpread diſtreſs and conſternation around them. At that period, however, the Country Gentlemen felt no ſuch preſſure of calamity; their tenants were proſpering, their rents were riſing; their abhorrence of the exceſſes of the French Republicans, their dread of the Reformers of England, and their infatuated devotion to the Miniſter, all continued without any very marked diminution; and commiſeration alone, for the diſtreſs of their mercantile Fellow-Citizens, could not induce them in any great proportion to abandon their habitual partiality to the Miniſter and his meaſures. But ſtill they were honeſt, though deluded men; they ſtill loved their Country and its Conſtitution, though their miſtaken ſupport of Mr. Pitt's ſyſtem hazarded greatly the exiſtence of both. They ſtill were a body of independent and virtuous men, ſincerely attached to rational Liberty, though too long duped by the artifices of a fraudful Miniſter. Undoubtedly they will ſee their error; they will perhaps confeſs it; and to them, at laſt, the Country will be indebted for the correction of Abuſes, and the preſervation of our Rights. Recent events in Parliament warrant this hope; and it cannot appear too ſanguine now to entertain it.

April 28th, 1805.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* HENRY PEIRSE, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Saturday Evening, Jan.* 31*ſt*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

THE meaſure we have under conſideration is certainly of great public importance; and for the ſake of the Public, it behoves us to take care that what is to be done may be done on the moſt ſafe and ſolid grounds. I do really think, as I told you in my haſty note written this day at noon, that we have the ſenſe of the County with us on the queſtion for Peace; particularly that the Manufacturers, formerly ſo violent againſt us, are now moſt ſtrenuous for putting an end to the War. Yet, that we may not be deceived by appearances, it has occurred to me to write to Mr. Linſley, the Chairman of the Leeds Meeting, and to Mr. Hamer Oates, who ſpoke with ſo much energy in ſupport of their queſtion for Peace, to inquire whether it is their opinion, 1ſt, That a queſtion for the diſmiſſal of Miniſters, as the beſt way of promoting that Peace they are ſo anxious to obtain, would be ſupported at a County Meeting by a majority of the Trading Intereſt of the Weſt-Riding. And if their opinion on this queſtion ſhould be negative, whether they can aſſure us,

2d, That a queſtion for Peace at a County Meeting, would be ſupported by a great and decided ſuperiority of that Intereſt.

I ap-

I apprehend the anſwer to the firſt query will be a negative; yet for reaſons which I will explain to Mr. Monſon when I have the pleaſure to ſee you both, I think it adviſable to put the queſtion to them. But if the anſwer to the 2d query ſhould be what I expect it will, that we may depend on being ſupported at a County Meeting by a conſiderable majority of the Trading Intereſt, we ſhall then have ſolid ground to go on; and it will then be perfectly ſatisfactory to you and Mr. Monſon, I doubt not, to proceed directly with the Requiſition, and ſend it to Mr. Wrightſon. If the anſwer ſhould unexpectedly be that we muſt not rely on having any conſiderable ſupport from that Intereſt, even for a Petition for Peace, at a County Meeting, in that caſe I ſhall moſt entirely agree with you and your brother, that the time for making this attempt, however virtuous, or however neceſſary in our judgment it may be, is not yet come.

Hoping that this application to the Leeds Merchants will be as ſatisfactory to you and Mr. Monſon as it will be to myſelf, I could not forbear immediately communicating the idea. I think I cannot hear from Leeds till Wedneſday next. On that day, if the anſwer comes to me in the morning, I will be with you an hour before dinner. If it ſhould not, expect me on Thurſday. I am,

My Dear Sir,
Moſt truly your's,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOSEPH LINSLEY, Eſq; Chairman *of the* Meeting *at* Leeds, *which petitioned for Peace in* 1801; *alſo, to* HAMER OATES, Eſq; *and the* Rev. WILLIAM WOOD.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 1ſt*, 1801.

Sir,

A Requiſition has been reſpectably ſigned in this neighbourhood, requeſting Mr. Wrightſon, in purſuance of the power veſted in him by a former Meeting, to call a freſh Meeting at Ringroſe's Tavern in York, to conſider an application to the High-Sheriff to call a Meeting of the County to petition the Throne on the preſent melancholy criſis of Public Affairs. But the Friends of this Requiſition conſidering a Meeting of the County of York to be a meaſure of great national importance, wiſh to act with a degree of caution adequate to that importance, and previouſly to aſcertain the ſupport they are likely to meet with, particularly from the Merchants and Manufacturers of Leeds, and the other great Towns in the Weſt-Riding, before they tender their Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon. I therefore beg leave, in their behalf, to aſk your opinion,

1. Whether a queſtion for the Diſmiſſal of Miniſters, as the beſt way of promoting that Peace which they are ſo anxious to obtain, would be ſupported at a County Meeting by a majority

a majority of the Trading Intereſt of the Weſt-Riding of Yorkſhire.

2. Whether a queſtion for Peace at a County Meeting would be ſupported by a great and decided ſuperiority of that Intereſt.

Your anſwer to theſe two queſtions, as far as you are enabled to form a judgment of the diſpoſition of the Trading Part of the Weſt-Riding, is requeſted to be ſent with as little loſs of time as poſſible, as the Friends of Peace in this part of Yorkſhire will take no farther ſteps in the buſineſs of their Requiſition till they have heard from you * or Mr. Oates.

I requeſt you to excuſe the trouble given you, by

Sir,

Your moſt obedient, humble ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. WILLIAM WOOD *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LEEDS, *Feb. 3d*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I HAVE been thinking of writing to you for ſome days, and have waited only till I ſhould find myſelf able to give you a more decided account of the ſtate of public opinion in this commercial part of the Country. A very material change has certainly taken place, which is daily increaſing, and if left

* To this letter no anſwer was received from Mr. Linſley.

to its natural operation will, I doubt not, produce happy conſequences to the Public at large. But it is of great conſequence that it ſhould not appear to be forcibly haſtened by the exertions of any particular ſet of men. I had ſome converſation with ſome judicious friends, more than a week ago, concerning the probable event of a cali forta County Meeting. It appeared to us, at that time, that though ſuch a meaſure may be deſirable, and likely to be productive of good effects in a few weeks, the public feelings are ſcarcely ſufficiently excited to leave no apprehenſion of a failure. The fact is, that a very great majority of thoſe who have hitherto been ſtrenuous advocates for the War, are in their hearts convinced of the neceſſity of Peace for the retrievement of their mercantile concerns, and the ſalvation of the Country; and if they had no prejudices againſt a particular deſcription of men to relinquiſh, and no unpleaſant acknowledgment of paſt errors to digeſt, would come readily forward with a Petition for a Change of Miniſters, or any other meaſure which would facilitate the reſtoration of Peace. Many of them have actually ſigned the preſent Petition, who would be terrified at the idea of acting in conjunction with men whom they have been taught to conſider as Republicans, and Enemies not only to Kings but to all ſocial order and uſeful ſubordination. I grant that their opinion is founded on a miſtake, but till they can be convinced it is ſo, they will certainly be influenced by it. In this light they have been accuſtomed

cuſtomed to regard almoſt the whole Body of Diſſenters, and all ſuch former Advocates for Parliamentary Reform as did not become Alarmiſts in an early period of the preſent War, and have not uniformly approved of Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration. In this number you will not be ſurpriſed to find yourſelf ranked with the foremoſt. Now the only game which the determined Friends of the preſent Adminiſtration and the violent Advocates for the continuance of the War have to play, is, to renew the old cry of danger to the Conſtitution, and bring into diſcredit, with the timid and the wavering, every attempt to make the Public Diſtreſs known to the Sovereign by the means of Public Meetings. On this account, I have always been deſirous that my friends ſhould not come very forward on this occaſion. I have not quite ſucceeded to my wiſh, for the preſſure of commercial difficulties will act with a force ſcarcely to be reſiſted. The cry againſt the Diſſenters is in conſequence, in ſome degree, raiſed; but I hope it has come rather too late; and I am fully perſuaded that in a little time many who have thought the worſt of us will be convinced that we are enlightened as well as ſincere Friends to our Country. But prejudices will not give way at once, and are ſure to be revived and ſtrengthened by any ſtep which either directly oppoſes them, or brings forward into view ideas that have been aſſociated with them. In this ſtate of public ſentiment, I am rather inclined to wiſh that a County Meeting may

be deferred a few weeks longer, though it may perhaps be desirable to have it in the course of a few weeks. I have seen Mr. Hamer Oates, who is waiting to consult with a few friends, and will answer your letter in a post or two. * Mr. Wilberforce's letter to the Committee, in answer to their communicating the Resolutions, &c. I have just read. It is written in his usual hypothetical, ambiguous stile, but it is sufficiently evident that his chief anxiety is to support the credit of Ministers. If you see the Leeds Intelligencer, you will perceive the manner in which the opposition to the Petitions is carried on.

With sincere good wishes for Mrs. W. and all your family,

I remain faithfully your's,

W. WOOD.

LETTER VI.

From WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Esq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

My Dear Sir,

I Found on my return from London your letter of the 28th, and this morning received your's of the 3d. I left every thing in doubt and obscurity. The only thing that is

* The answer of Mr. Hamer Oates to the 4th letter of this Number has been preserved; but as it contains only the same objections to the measure proposed by the Landed Gentlemen of the North-Riding, which Mr. Wood has stated in this letter, it seemed unnecessary to request Mr. H. Oates to permit his answer to be published.

certain

certain is that the Members do not flock to Mr. Pitt's ſtandard with the ſame zeal as heretofore; and in the City his reputation is much faded. Among my friends, with whom I had an opportunity of converſing, it was not conſidered that a Petition for Peace from this County, worded by our enemies, implying no cenſure, and pointing to no change of men or meaſures, would be matter of much import. Before I hear from you again, you will be fully informed how far we are to expect ſupport; and whatever you and our friends think expedient, I ſhall moſt chearfully concur in. I wiſh I could ſay that I ſaw any thing in the variety of intrigue going on at this moment that boded good to the Public.

I am, dear Sir,

Very faithfully your's,

W. WRIGHTSON.

CUSWORTH, *Feb. 4th*, 1801.

LETTER VII.

From SAMUEL SHORE, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MEERSBROOK, *Feb. 5th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Thank you much for your two letters, one received a long time ago, which I ſhould have replied to much earlier, had it not been for the reaſon you referred to that I had nothing pleaſant of a public nature to communicate. Your laſt, received yeſterday, an-

nounces a meaſure in contemplation of importance; and I ſhould rejoice greatly in the proſpect of it, if there were any opening to expect ſucceſs. The ſituation of the Country demands it; but I fear the prevailing ſupineneſs of a great part of the People, and the rancourous party ſpirit which ſtill remains among others, notwithſtanding the ſufferings of the Nation, will afford no chance of that ſupport which would anſwer the end deſired. I hear the Petition at Leeds was by no means generally ſupported, and at Wakefield I am told great party violence has been manifeſted, and Counter-Petitions carried; it has alſo been ſaid to be the ſame at Leeds*. You may probably have obtained more authentic intelligence from thence. You will find the report of Pitt's removal proves unfounded. I ſincerely wiſh it had been true, if a thorough change of meaſures had been the conſequence, which would be the only chance to ſave the Country, now, from the ſituation of the Continent, in greater peril than ever before. But it appears to me that ſtill ſeverer ſufferings muſt take place, before thoſe who have ſupported the preſent Adminiſtration with ſo much infatuation can be brought to change their conduct. Till that can be brought about

* For the Wakefield *Proteſt* ſee the 7th Preliminary Paper of this Volume. No Counter-Petition or Proteſt was adopted at any Public Meeting in Leeds; but Reſolutions were publiſhed with the ſignatures of the Mayor of Leeds, Mr. Becket, Mr. Calverly, &c. annexed, declaring the reaſons of their diſſent from the Petition which had been agreed to by the Merchants and Manufacturers who had met at the Cloth-Hall in Leeds on the 13th of January, 1801. For theſe Reſolutions ſee the 10th Preliminary Paper of this Volume.

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in a very conſiderable degree, it ſeems to me in vain for the real conſiſtent Friends of Liberty and of the Conſtitution to exert themſelves, and by ſo doing, without ſucceſs, the hazard is of their doing harm, and, inſtead of counteracting, of their ſtrengthening the hands of thoſe who have brought the preſent miſchiefs upon this devoted Country. I am glad to hear of the welfare of your family; all here and at my ſon's are well, and deſire to be particularly remembered to you and your's, with,

Dear Sir, your's moſt cordially,

SAM. SHORE.

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* NORTHUMBERLAND.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 6th*, 1801.

My Lord,

I BEG leave to offer to your Grace's peruſal a copy of a Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon to call a Previous Meeting, with a view to obtain a General Meeting of the County; which Requiſition has been ſigned by near twenty Gentlemen, chiefly of this neighbourhood, and will be ſent without delay to Mr. Wrightſon.

I think I may ſafely venture to aſſure your Grace that there is a very good proſpect of ſucceſs. If the County ſhould not be quite prepared to accede to a queſtion for the removal

removal of Miniſters, yet a Petition for Peace would apparently meet the general approbation and ſupport. *

I have the honour to be
Your Grace's moſt obedient ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER IX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* HENRY PEIRSE, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 7th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I HAVE this morning received a letter from Mr. Fox, dated Feb. 4th. That was ſeveral days poſterior to the report of Mr. Pitt's reſignation. And as Mr. Fox, though writing on the ſubject of our projected Meeting, hints at no difficulty from any exiſting cabal or intrigue, I conceive he knows of none. I have alſo heard from our friend Milnes. He thinks we are ſure of a great acceſſion of ſtrength from Lord Fitzwilliam, and of a ſtill greater from the Manufacturers, who are almoſt to a man adverſe to the War.

This being the caſe, I conceive not a day ſhould be loſt in forwarding the Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon. I therefore ſend this down by my ſervant, requeſting to know your opinion and Mr. Monſon's upon the buſineſs, as it now ſtands, heartily and earneſtly wiſhing for your approbation to proceed. The

* A ſimilar letter was alſo ſent to the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Thanet, &c.

Country

Country expects it. Delay will expoſe us to Miniſterial manœuvres, and leſſen our hope of being able to ſtop the calamities of War for the approaching campaign. I think I may venture to aſſure you our ſucceſs will be deciſive.

With beſt wiſhes, particularly to Miſs Peirſe, who, I hope, is ſtill better to-day, I am,

Dear Sir,

Moſt truly your's,

C. WYVILL.

P.S. I have written to Mr. Cradock; received no letter from Leeds*; and conſequently am the more afraid of delay †.

LETTER X.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BOATON-HALL, *Feb. 8th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

WE wiſh the Requiſition Meeting, which we truſt you will have the goodneſs to advertiſe immediately in the York Papers, to be held about Tueſday the 24th of February, if agreeable to you, in order that we may be able to make all our friends acquainted with the day on which it is to be held. The advertiſement will thus appear twice in the

* Alluding to the expected letter from Mr. Linſley, which never arrived.

† The anſwer to this letter was the deciſive approbation of Mr. Peirſe and Mr. Monſon to tender the Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon.

York

York Herald, which will be very material. We conceive much will depend on bringing a Great Body to attend that day *. I am,

With ſincereſt regard,

Dear Sir,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. Would it not be proper to advertiſe the Meeting in two or three of the London Papers, and alſo in thoſe of Leeds, Hull, &c? Alderman Wilſon of York, if you deſire it, will readily do this for you, I dare ſay.

LETTER XI.

From WM. WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

FAYSTON, *Feb.* 10*th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Met ſeveral of our friends here yeſterday, and I have ſeen ſeveral others within theſe few days. I find them all anxious for a County

* In conſequence of the encouragement received from his friends at Bedale, the Editor by the next poſt ſent this letter, with the Requiſition annexed, to William Wrightſon, Eſq; but the leading Friends of Liberty at Leeds and other parts of the Weſt-Riding, who had been appriſed of the meaſure meditated in the North, expreſſed their diſapprobation of it in terms ſo ſtrong, that Mr. Wrghtſon, with that prudence and caution which have ſo often marked his character with honour in the courſe of theſe attempts to aſſemble the County of York in favour of both Peace and Reform, delayed, for a ſhort time, to ſend the Requiſition to the Sheriff of Yorkſhire. His anſwer to this letter, which is the next in this ſeries, appeared to the Editor perfectly right under the exiſting circumſtances; but it deſtroyed the hope which the Editor had begun to indulge, that Yorkſhire might again be ranged on the ſide of Liberty.

Meeting,

Meeting, and ſanguine in the hopes of being joined by many new friends in an application to the Sheriff; but all deprecate the idea of any Previous Meeting. Much time will be gained, and much acceſſion of ſtrength, if, inſtead of any Previous Meeting, we were all to exert ourſelves in our different diſtricts to obtain ſignatures to requeſt the Sheriff to call a County Meeting to petition his Majeſty to take ſuch immediate meaſures as may be beſt calculated to reſtore Peace to this afflicted Country. I underſtand from Mr. Milnes that I ſhall find a letter from you when I get home, ſigned by many reſpectable friends, to call a Previous Meeting. Under the circumſtances above ſtated, I have no doubt you and the Gentlemen who have ſigned it will allow me to pauſe till I hear again from you, before I take any ſtep which I ſhould fear would be in oppoſition to the opinion of all our friends in this part of the County.

I am,

My Dear Sir,

Moſt faithfully your's,

W. WRIGHTSON.

P. S. Some form of a Requiſition ſhould be drawn, and ſent to different perſons, if this line of conduct is adopted.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 11th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I BELIEVE the Previous Meeting, had it been well ſupported in the Weſt-Riding, would have been very numerouſly attended by men who now ſee the propriety of our meaſures, of which they had their doubts before. And thus the old Friends of Peace and Liberty would have obtained an increaſe of ſtrength, which would have given them a deciſive influence at the propoſed County Meeting. It would have enabled them, I think, to have carried a Petition for a ſpeedy Peace, (for certainly that was the queſtion proper to be moved) and alſo to have carried ſome other queſtion tending to call the attention of the County to the preſent ſtate of Liberty in this Kingdom, at a ſubſequent Meeting of the County. In this manner, I hoped that we might be able to give a popular complection to our meaſure, ſo as to ſatisfy the Friends of Liberty, and not only unite them completely with us in Yorkſhire, but obtain for us a degree of confidence in other parts of the Country, which might be uſefully employed hereafter, in checking dangerous extremes on either hand, and promoting the ſucceſs of moderate Reform; without which, in my judgment, nothing permanent will have been obtained for the happineſs of the Nation.

Nation. By the ſtep you propoſe taking, it is probable that ſome new converts to Peace, but hoſtile to our objects, will be gratified, and may attend the Meeting. The queſtion for Peace may be carried more eaſily, and with a majority ſomewhat greater. But in point of Liberty, I fear, we ſhall be loſers. The ſlender tie which ſeemed, and only ſeemed, to keep together a few truſty Friends to Liberty, will vaniſh, and the opportunity of uniting a much more conſiderable Body in the courſe of this year, at ſome ſubſequent Meeting after the firſt, *the ſecond*, as projected *by my plan*, will be totally loſt. And this, as I judge, to carry a queſtion which we ſhould have been ſure of carrying, though we had perſiſted to bring it forward by the old Friends of Peace and the former Requiſition. I had, however, no thoughts of attempting to revive the Aſſociation, or any ſimilar meaſure. But this eventful year probably might have afforded an opportunity to unite the Friends of Liberty once more in ſome way, which at this moment it is impoſſible to define. I ſhall much regret that loſs, as if any thing could have given us a chance to ſave the Country from a Revolution, and at the ſame time to preſerve and improve our Liberty, it would have been the formation of ſuch a Body of Men in this Country.

But your letter does not admit the hope that our Weſt-Riding Friends will adhere to the plan which ſeemed to meet their approbation before. I can only ſay, that if they wiſh to conciliate Lord Fitzwilliam, and other very reſpectable

ſpectable new converts to Peace, by this ſacrifice, it does not meet my concurrence or approbation; becauſe I am ſatisfied that the queſtion for a ſpeedy Peace could not be ſucceſsfully reſiſted at a County Meeting, though brought forward by thoſe who have always been the Friends of Peace.

I therefore muſt decline drawing up a freſh Requiſition to the Sheriff, or taking any part in a freſh correſpondence to promote the ſignature of ſuch Requiſition in the North-Riding. But Peace is an object ſo truly to be wiſhed, that when Mr. Wrightſon has ſignified his non-compliance, I ſhall readily ſign ſuch a Requiſition, when tendered to me by yourſelf or Mr. Wrightſon, and will undoubtedly attend the County Meeting, if my health will permit.

I ſhall ſend a copy of your letter to Mr. Peirſe, Mr. Monſon, and ſome other friends, as ſoon as poſſible.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* H. PEIRSE, Eſq.

Dear Sir,

I SEND you a copy of a letter juſt received from Mr. Milnes. After ſo much fatigue, my health and ſpirits will not allow me to engage

engage in a freſh correſpondence, as propoſed by Mr. Milnes. Neither do I ſee any reaſon to think that a Petition for Peace would be rejected at a County Meeting, becauſe propoſed by us. But as they (in the Weſt-Riding) refuſe to comply with our Requiſition, or to attend a Previous Meeting, it is unavoidable for us, I think, to give up the meaſure *.

But Peace is ſo neceſſary, that I have told Mr. Milnes I will ſign a Requiſition from him or Mr. Wrightſon, and attend a County Meeting.

I hope Miſs Peirſe continues to mend daily.

Pray ſhow theſe papers to Mr. Monſon with my beſt regard.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Moſt truly your's,

C. WYVILL.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 11th*, 1801.

* Mr. Wrightſon had not refuſed to comply with the Requiſition ſent him, but had delayed compliance for weighty reaſons given in his anſwer of Feb. 10th, 1801 (Letter 11). Under the circumſtances in which he was placed, he could not poſſibly have acted with greater propriety. But ſuch was the impreſſion on the Editor's mind at that moment of diſappointed hope. Whether any part of his own conduct, upon this unexpected diſappointment was reprehenſible or not, it is not for him to determine. But it is his duty to ſubmit, without reſerve, to the inſpection of the Public whatever Papers may be neceſſary to exhibit the ſentiments and explain the conduct of the perſons concerned on this occaſion, and which may enable the Public to form a juſt judgment of their character and views.

LETTER XIV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Esq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 12*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I Have understood from our friend Mr. Milnes, that it is the general * intention of the Gentlemen of your part of the Country not to attend the Previous Meeting, if you should comply with the Requisition from the North-Riding. Under these circumstances, I conceive it would be the wish of every Gentleman who signed that Requisition, that you should not call a Previous Meeting.

I am,
With great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

* This information was communicated to the Editor in Mr. Milnes's letter to him of the 10th of February, 1801, which letter he has preserved; but he has omitted to print it in this series, because Mr. Milnes's letter of the 14th of February, 1801, which is the 17th in this series, more clearly states the difference of opinion which subsisted on this occasion between persons united as they were by long friendship, and whose general principles of Liberty, Civil and Religious, were the same; and therefore it seems sufficient to publish that alone.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Esq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 12*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

ON re-conſidering my letter to you of yeſterday's date, I think my reaſons for declining to draw up a Requiſition to the Sheriff, and tender it to our Friends in this Riding, are not ſufficiently explained. I therefore beg to trouble you again upon the ſubject *.

I continue to think we ſhould have been ſucceſsful at a County Meeting, called by the old Friends of Peace and Liberty; that we ſhould have carried a Petition for Peace, and ſtrengthened the influence of men, whoſe zeal for Liberty is the ſole cauſe of the difficulty raiſed by the new Converts to Peace. And I do not think it prudent to let down the character of our old Friends, as liable in the leaſt degree to the charge of Republicaniſm or violence, merely to gain twenty or thirty perſons, or more, who may have thoſe unreaſonable prejudices, even though ſome of them ſhould be men of very conſiderable influence. In this reſpect, it appears to me, that the abandoning of the firſt Requiſition is a diſadvantage ſo far as Liberty is concerned. It will retard the formation of a body of men in Yorkſhire on moderate prin-

* The Editor's letter to Mr. Milnes of the 11th of February, 1801, has not been preſerved.

ciples of Liberty; the favourable moment for increaſing your ſtrength and reputation will be loſt; your number indeed will be ſwelled at a County Meeting by men of very different principles co-operating with you for the purpoſe of Peace; but yourſelves will be abandoned by them, if you take the leaſt ſtep for the promotion of Liberty. This appears to me the conſequence to be expected from giving up a Previous Meeting of the old Friends of Liberty as well as of Peace. I cannot but entertain theſe apprehenſions, unleſs I knew more of your plan; particularly, whether it is underſtood that nothing but a queſtion for Peace ſhall be countenanced, or admitted to be debated at the intended Meeting of the County. If you inform me that no aſſurance has been given, or is intended to be given to the new Converts, that the old Friends of Peace and Liberty will diſcourage and oppoſe the moving of any Reſolution, for inſtance, to cenſure Miniſters, or to adjourn the Meeting to a day to be fixed *, for the purpoſe of conſidering the ſtate of National Liberty, as well as that of receiving the anſwer from the Throne, my apprehenſions will be removed; and I ſhall have no

* It was evident to the Editor from the Reſolutions paſſed at the Meetings of Leeds, Bradford, and Wakefield, &c. that a Petition for Peace could not be negatived by a Meeting of the Freeholders of Yorkſhire. He therefore thought that the intereſt of the Public could not be injured by propoſing that a vote cenſuring the conduct of Miniſters ſhould be paſſed at their intended Meeting, and that a ſubſequent Meeting ſhould be appointed to conſider the ſtate of National Liberty. He reſerved to himſelf the right to offer thoſe propoſitions, and would have exerciſed that right, if the Meeting had been held.

objection

objection to hand your Requiſition to the Gentlemen of this part of the Country, and to aſſiſt at any Private Meeting of Conſultation the day before the Meeting of the County. But if aſſurances, ſuch as thoſe I have ſtated, have been made to the new Converts, I cannot take a part in this buſineſs, which would imply my conſent to theſe aſſurances.

I aſſure you I feel as much regret at this unfortunate difference of opinion as yourſelf, and ſhall be truly happy if the anſwer you are able to ſend me is ſuch that I can take an active part with you, Mr. Wrightſon, and Mr. Strickland in the meaſure you have propoſed, without incurring the blame of inconſiſtence. It has hitherto been my higheſt ſatisfaction to act with men whom I love perſonally, and whoſe principles I revere.

I imagine the perturbed ſtate of the Cabinet will be no objection to your going on with the propoſed Meeting. Yet a few days ſpent in previous conſultation, with a view to preſerve the reputation, and confirm the Union of the old Friends of Liberty, will certainly be well ſpent. And ſhould it appear that the new Converts are to come to you, and accede to your meaſures, not that you are to go over to them, and accede to their meaſures, excluding every object but that of Peace, there will be no difficulty whatever in ſecuring the moſt perfect harmony. I am,

Dear Sir,

With ſincere regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 13*th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I DO not feel it eaſy to me to have given a negative to any thing you have aſked me to do. What I allude to is a trifle: the drawing up of a freſh Requiſition. If you do not think it better to uſe one drawn by you or Mr. Wrightſon, the one incloſed is at your ſervice. I will ſign the one you may ſend me back, and tender it to our Friends here, who will gladly ſign it. You ſee I fully rely that no reſtrictions hurtful to our cauſe have been agreed to by you and Mr. Wrightſon.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

P. S. My fears aroſe from what I had heard of the ſentiments of a Noble Convert in the Weſt.

To the HIGH-SHERIFF of the County of York.

Sir,

WE whoſe names are ſubſcribed, requeſt you, at as early a day as may be convenient, to call a General Meeting of the Freeholders

Freeholders of this County, in order that they may have an opportunity to petition the Throne for a ſpeedy Peace.

LETTER XVII.

From R. S. Milnes, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. Wyvill.

My Dear Sir,

THE ſituation of the Country is ſuch, its reſources ſo far exhauſted, and its enemies ſo formidable, that without an *immediate* Peace I can contemplate nothing but ruin. With that conviction upon my mind, I was urged to adopt thoſe meaſures which appeared to me moſt conducive to obtain ſo deſirable an end; I thought it the beſt policy, if there was a County Meeting, that we ſhould unite as many as we could upon that point alone, without touching upon other matters. If Miniſters did not give us Peace, we ſhould ſoon come forward with additional ſtrength, and addreſs for their removal. Peace and the Removal of Miniſters is the only good I dare hope in theſe times. Although I maintain theſe ſentiments, I truſt you will give me credit for not having abated in my attachment to the principles of Liberty, or having formed any new political connections. You obſerve, that the numbers will be ſwelled at a County Meeting by men of very different principles co-operating with us for the purpoſe of a Peace, but that we ſhall be aban-

doned by them, if we take the leaſt ſtep for the promotion of Liberty. That is exactly my opinion, and it is what decided my conduct. I do not know one perſon that has lately changed his opinion with regard to the War, that has done it from a conviction that our Liberties have been trampled upon by Miniſters. The real Friends to Liberty in this Country are very few; from repeated trials we know them well; and from the experience we have had, it does not appear to me a judicious proceeding to perſiſt in objects that rather revolt than conciliate the Public Mind. What could have enabled Mr Pitt wantonly to plunge the Country into this War, and to carry it on for ſo many years without a proſpect of ſucceſs, until he has brought us to the verge of deſtruction, but his artful policy in working upon the fears and bigotry of the Nation? He has ſucceeded completely in repreſenting Reformers, even temperate ones, to be Jacobins, and Diſſenters to be Republicans. Therefore it is my opinion, as long as this deluſion prevails, we ſhall do more to injure the Public Cauſe by actively promoting the principles of Liberty and Reform, than if we were ſilent upon the ſubject. Though we are ſilent, it is no ſacrifice of principle; it is no abandonment of our Cauſe; but from the the hatred and deteſtation the Public have conceived againſt Reform, we do not think it expedient at preſent to propound any queſtion of that kind; therefore Mr. Wrightſon, many of our friends, and myſelf have declared it to be our opinion that it is our beſt policy

licy to confine the object of our Addreſs to the obtaining an immediate Peace; but we have not entered into any engagement that would preclude us from embracing other objects, ſhould it be thought expedient ſo to do. That will be a matter of conſideration when the Requiſitioniſts meet at York, which no doubt they will do the day before the Meeting.

Being rather unwell yeſterday, I employed my wife as my amanuenſis. I received your's this morning, with a copy of a Requiſition, which I think cannot be objected to. As there is no perſon whoſe character and political principles I hold in ſuch high veneration as your's, there muſt be that coincidence of ſentiment that we can but have the ſame object in view, though we may vary a little as to the mode of obtaining it. Perhaps you do not get the Leeds Paper. I have ſent it, that you may ſee what Mr. Wood ſays reſpecting the repeal of the Teſt-Act. I entirely agree with him, and apply the ſame reaſoning to Reform *. In this neighbourhood, we think, under the preſent circumſtances of the Adminiſtration, we ought to delay for a ſhort time circulating the Requiſition; ſo give us your opinion upon that ſubject. †

I am, with the greateſt regard,

Your ſincere friend,

FRYSTON, *Feb.* 14, 1801. R. S. MILNES.

* For the reaſoning here alluded to, ſee the 5th Preliminary Paper of this Volume.

† Thus ended the diſcuſſion which had ariſen between his excellent friend, Mr. Milnes, and the Editor, on the queſtion, whether on this occaſion a Previous Meeting of the Requiſitioniſts ſhould,

LETTER XVIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOHN HUTTON, Eſq; SAMUEL CROMPTON, Eſq; *and* other Gentlemen *in the* North *of* Yorkſhire, *on the plan of a* Previous Meeting *having been abandoned by their* Friends *in the Weſt.*

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 14*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

OUR Requiſition has been ſtopt by our Friends in the Weſt-Riding, as I apprehend from their wiſh to conciliate the new Converts

ſhould, or ſhould not be called. In their political principles there was indeed an entire coincidence; but their ſentiments differed with reſpect to the policy of endeavouring, by ſuch a Previous Meeting, to unite, as far as it might be practicable, the Cauſe of Peace with that of Conſtitutional Liberty. If Peace alone had been neceſſary for the welfare of the Community, the omiſſion of the Previous Meeting, to which Mr. Milnes and the Gentlemen of Leeds, &c. objected, would have been undeniably preferable: it would have been thence underſtood, that the Requiſitioniſts would be ſilent on every other ſubject; and the greateſt majority for a ſpeedy Peace would thus have been collected at the Meeting of the County. But there were other objects deemed eſſential to the welfare of the Community by the Editor and his worthy Correſpondent, for attaining which they had long acted together in confidential union. Convinced as each of them was, that the Redreſs of our Conſtitutional Grievances was alſo neceſſary, they yet differed, on this occaſion, reſpecting the means which to one of them ſeemed beſt calculated to promote that Redreſs without hazarding the attainment of Peace. Whence, it may be aſked, aroſe this diverſity of ſentiment? The Editor hopes he may be allowed to ſay, that the motives were public-ſpirited, and the intentions honeſt on each ſide; but from the different ſituations in which he and his friend were placed, there was an unavoidable diverſity in their view of the queſtion before them. From his ſituation in the moſt populous and moſt diſtreſſed part of Yorkſhire, Mr. Milnes felt more ſtrongly the neceſſity of a ſpeedy Peace than the Editor, who was placed at a diſtance from the ſcene of their diſtreſs. In pleading for that mode of conduct which was calculated to give the utmoſt weight to the application for Peace, Mr. Milnes felt himſelf contending for what certainly was an object of *great* importance to the Nation, and of *the greateſt*

Converts to Peace, by ſubſtituting another Requiſition to the High-Sheriff immediately; I mean without the intervention of a Previous

greateſt to his manufacturing neighbours: And when this object was ſecured, he flattered himſelf that ſome future opportunity would occur, perhaps at no very diſtant point of time, when the purſuit of the other important object, Conſtitutional Reform, might be renewed with a better proſpect of ſucceſs. On the other hand, the Editor conſidered that the evils of War then preſſed ſeverely on the Country; and it was evidently become the general wiſh, that hoſtilities might be ſpeedily terminated. He was convinced, therefore, that the attainment of Peace would not be riſqued by the Friends of Conſtitutional Reform being the oſtenſible movers of a meaſure calculated to accelerate the return of Peace; but that *they* would probably acquire by it an increaſe of credit, which would be favourable to the Cauſe of Reform. He had obſerved that, in modern times, Warfare between Nations like thoſe of France and Britain, not greatly diſproportioned in force, and ſeparated by the ſea, never had been, and hardly could be carried to the extremes of conqueſt or extermination. However enraged they might be, however eager to injure the foe with whom they were contending, each of the hoſtile Nations in the progreſs of hoſtilities would feel ſufficient calamity to be inclined to Peace, a little ſooner or a little later, on terms ſomewhat better or worſe. And thus, in ſuch a caſe, the evils of War muſt ultimately become their own cure. But experience had ſhewn that the Redreſs of Conſtitutional Grievances would be ſought in vain when Peace had lulled the People into a drowſy acquieſcence under acknowledged abuſes; and when luxurious enjoyment had palſied thoſe feelings of Patriotiſm which adverſity alone had excited. Thoſe abuſes are the very ſource whence our paſſionate and unneceſſary Wars have ſprung, with every domeſtic hardſhip which now embitters the life of the Britiſh ſubject. And therefore the Editor was ſatisfied, *at that criſis*, as he is *at the preſent*, that the true and laſting benefit of the Country would beſt be conſulted by promoting Peace, not excluſively, but in conjunction with the moderate and legal correction of our Conſtitutional Abuſes.

The Editor adds with a melancholy ſatisfaction, that this diſcuſſion with Mr. Milnes, and the continued diverſity of their opinions on this important ſubject, made not the ſmalleſt alteration in their ſentiments of mutual eſteem and regard. Their friendſhip and confidential connection in political buſineſs continued without change, till the unfortunate event of Mr. Milnes's death, in the ſummer of the year 1804, which no one lamented more ſincerely than the Editor. It was to him the loſs of a highly-valued private friend; and though Mr. Milnes had ceaſed to repreſent the City

ous Meeting *. I hope this difference of opinion may be got over, without any very ſerious detriment to the cauſe; and I will write again, as ſoon as I receive farther intelligence from the Weſt. I am,

With great regard,
My Dear Sir,
Your faithful and much obliged
C. WYVILL.

City of York in Parliament, it was to the Public the loſs of a Patriot, equally diſtinguiſhed by the candour and liberality of his ſentiments, the excellence of his judgment, and the long conſiſtence of his conduct as a Public Man of the ſtricteſt honour and integrity. In his Addreſs to his Conſtituents, on reſigning his ſeat in Parliament, not long before his death, he aſſured them that he left the Houſe of Commons with the conſcious ſatisfaction of having never given a vote there but from the conviction of his mind that it was right. The exact expreſſion is not here quoted, but the ſenſe of it is accurately preſerved; and he left not an enemy behind him ſo uncandid as to queſtion the truth of this aſſertion.

May 10th, 1805.

* This difference of opinion having been thus far adjuſted, the Popular Agents were on the point of beginning the long-meditated movement of Yorkſhire in oppoſition to the ſyſtem of War; and had this ſyſtem continued, the attempt to animate that County to purſue the united objects of Peace and Reform might have been ſucceſsful, and the altered temper of the Nation held forth the hope that the other Counties alſo might concur. But at the date of this letter the pacific plan of the Court began to be gradually unfolded; the ſcenery of State was ſhifted, and new Political Actors advanced upon the Stage: The retirement of the Miniſter of War, and the appointment of Mr. Addington to ſucceed him, ſeemed to confirm what rumour had ſuggeſted: In the courſe of a few weeks the conciliating tone, and the meaſures of the new Miniſter more and more diſtinctly marked his diſpoſition to make, or to receive pacific overtures, which at laſt he declared in Parliament. At the proſpect of a Peace thus opened to its view, the Nation was tranſported with joy; its juſt complaints were diſcontinued, its grievances at home, and its perils from abroad, were ſoon forgotten; and Popular Meetings to conſider the means of prevention or redreſs became too unſeaſonable to be named.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXII.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with ſeveral* Yorkſhire Gentlemen *in the year* 1801, *with a view to promote a* Meeting *of the* County, *after the meaſure of a* Previous Meeting *propoſed to be called by* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *had been laid aſide, with a* Letter *on this ſubject from the* EDITOR *to* THOMAS BIGGE, Eſq.

LETTER I.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 15th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

YOUR's of the 14th inſtant has quite ſet my mind at reſt; I can now go on with unabated zeal, conſidering myſelf certain of the ſupport of thoſe friends I moſt highly eſteem, in any reaſonable attempt I may make to lead our new allies into meaſures tending to promote the Cauſe of Liberty. To ſecure Liberty, I deem the grand and ultimate end of our exertions, though the attainment of Peace is our immediate and neceſſary object. I have not the leaſt idea, however, of moving any thing on Reform, the Teſt, &c. at preſent; nor can it probably be done with prudence this

this year. But reſolutions, cenſuring Miniſters for their attacks upon the Conſtitution, as well as for their engaging us needleſsly in this new War, may probably be found not unacceptable to the new Converts; and ſome other reſolutions perhaps may go down for forming a Committee. Excuſe haſte.

I am ever,
Dear Sir,
With the greateſt regard,
Your ſincere friend,
C. WYVILL.

P. S. I had almoſt forgot to mention, that I am inclined to think we ought to proceed immediately. It is the wiſh of all here; and I have reaſon to believe it is the wiſh alſo of thoſe we moſt highly eſteem in London.

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* HENRY PEIRSE, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 15*th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Have the utmoſt pleaſure in aſſuring you, that the difference of opinion between our friends, Mr. Milnes and Mr. Wrightſon, and myſelf, has been terminated in the moſt ſatisfactory manner. Knowing the great influence of Lord Fitzwilliam in that part of Yorkſhire, and the violent prejudices of our old opponents at Leeds, I was afraid that ſome reſtrictions might have been agreed to that would have been a diſadvantage to Liberty; the

the better ſecuring of which is our ultimate end, though the attaining of Peace is our immediate object. But I am happy to ſay, that our excellent friend's letter from Eryſton this morning fully ſatisfies me that there is no ground for any ſuch apprehenſion. The old Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon for a Previous Meeting will be ſet aſide; and a freſh one to the Sheriff to call a County Meeting will be ſubſtituted in its place. I hope in the courſe of three or four days to ſend you a copy of it. They have ſome heſitation in proceeding from theſe late changes; but I am well aſſured they ought not to delay the meaſure propoſed. I have written to that effect to Mr. Milnes. I am, &c.

C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 16*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I Expreſſed my opinion much too faintly yeſterday. We all agree here in thinking that not a day ſhould be loſt in tendering the new Requiſition. I have inquired, and find from the beſt authority that there is nothing in the intrigue now carrying on in Town which ought to delay our proceeding a moment. I hope, therefore, to have the pleaſure of hearing on Wedneſday morning that you have ſet the buſineſs agoing. I only wait

wait for that, to tender the Requiſition here. As ſoon as you have got 40 names, I would recommend you to ſend the Requiſition to the Sheriff; and in the mean time, till his anſwer comes, to go on with your application to get as many names as you can, to appear with the other 40 names when advertiſed. I alſo would adviſe you to get the conſent of all, that their names may appear annexed to the advertiſement, in the event of the Sheriff's refuſal. Without this precaution, you may experience a moſt inconvenient delay.

I am,

Dear Sir,

With great regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 17*th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Have this moment received your's of the 15th inſtant; and I haſten to aſſure you that I am fully ſatisfied by Mr. Milnes's letter that all is rightly underſtood between us. The friends in Yorkſhire with whom I am moſt completely agreed in every political view, in every principle of Civil and Religious Liberty, are yourſelf, Mr. Peirſe, Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Strickland. If in the arduous

ous ſtruggle in which we are about to engage, and which may laſt for years, ultimate ſucceſs to the Cauſe of Liberty is to crown our exertions, I muſt own I look to it chiefly from the firmneſs, the public ſpirit, and the enlightened zeal of the friends I have named. I feel for all of them the ſincereſt perſonal regard, and for a moment I can never doubt the rectitude of their intentions. I wiſh to merit the conſtant continuance of their regard and kind opinion of me, and to act with them, while I am able to act at all.

With reſpect to the late difference of opinion, which I aſſure you gave me as much pain as it could give you or my worthy friend, Mr. Milnes, it is paſt; and my mind is fully fixed to go firmly forward with you and him in the road you wiſhed me to take. When I have the pleaſure to ſee you, I will ſhow you every material letter I have written on the ſubject of a County Meeting. And I think from ſome part of the correſpondence * it will appear to your ſatisfaction that we ought to be very cautious with reſpect to certain new Converts, whoſe jealouſy of Popular Meetings and of all meaſures calculated to give efficacy to their efforts by forming any ſort of union beyond that of the day of Meeting, would ruin our proſpect of ultimately ſerving the Cauſe of Liberty, if we ſhould unwarily yield to their wiſhes. The circumſtances alluded to were unknown to you and Mr.

* From its recency, and from the neceſſary attention to the feelings of individuals, the correſpondence which is here alluded to cannot be publiſhed at preſent.

Milnes. I thought ſo at that time when I was fearful of harm; I am ſure of it now that Mr. Milnes has anſwered my letter. But I ſhould be utterly unworthy of any confidence, if, in a matter of ſuch vaſt importance to the Public, I could entertain a fear of ſome unwary conceſſion having been made by any friends, however high my eſteem of thoſe friends might be, without informing them of that fear. It has been done, and their anſwer has fully ſatisfied me, and removed every fear. And now, as I ſaid before, I will proceed in the path chalked out by you and Mr. Milnes with alacrity, and do the beſt I can to promote ſucceſs in that way. I do not think variations of plan, in popular buſineſs, are uſually advantageous, and when the Public are evidently coming into the views of the Popular Agents it can hardly be neceſſary to vary their plan. I doubt this variation may retard our Meeting at a time when delay is much againſt our ſucceeding; and I fear it expoſes us to ſome embarraſſment, which in the firſt mode might have been avoided. But it is uſeleſs to repine at theſe inconveniences, if they do really exiſt; and it is neceſſary now, for the Public Good, that we unite with the utmoſt vigour to promote a County Meeting in the mode agreed on. Be aſſured, my dear Sir, I ſhall do ſo moſt heartily, and that I am, with the ſincereſt regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

Feb. 18th. I have juſt received your's of the 17th. It will really give me the greateſt pleaſure

ſure to hear your Meeting this day at Fryſton reſolves to go on. In delay there will be danger. The ſooner we can meet, after due notice given, the better. The ground at preſent is ſtrong indeed. Notice of Negociation, however, ſhould by no means deter us from puſhing on. I agree with you, that even on that ground we ſhall be very ſtrong. We ſhall have the Public certainly with us *. I hear of others waiting for us.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM STRICKLAND, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 18*th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I DO not think variations in the mode of proceeding, when the end is agreed, are uſually advantageous to the Popular Cauſe. They weary ſome by making their previous exertions a mere waſte of labour; they diſcourage others by an appearance of indeciſion; and when the Public are anxious for the end you have in view, ſuch changes in the

* On a former occaſion, Mr. Pitt had declared that he had negociated for Peace without wiſhing to effect it. The ſyſtem of the Miniſter who had now ſucceeded him, was not yet ſufficiently underſtood to differ from that of his Predeceſſor. Under theſe circumſtances, and from the improbability that the Northern War could be ſpeedily terminated, and that France was at that time ſincerely diſpoſed to Peace, the intended movement might have taken place with propriety, even though notice of an overture to negociate had been given; but the firmneſs and better judgment of Mr. Wrightſon were over-ruled in the conſultation at Fryſton by the timorous counſels of the Merchants at Leeds.

mode are unneceſſary. You are ſure of increaſing your ſtrength by perſevering in your plan, becauſe the objections to the mode ceaſe to be felt, when the end is greatly deſired.

On this view of the matter, being clear from your letter, as well as from many other accounts, that the ſenſe of this County, and probably that of the Nation at large is with us in wiſhing for Peace, I thought it adviſable to loſe no time in attempting to bring forward a County Meeting by the means formerly approved, viz. by a Requiſition to Mr. Wrightſon to call a Previous Meeting. A Requiſition, ſufficiently ſigned, was ſent; but the anſwer was, that if a Previous Meeting were called, few, if any of our friends from that part of the County would attend. They wiſhed to ſubſtitute a Requiſition to the Sheriff. For the reaſons I have given I was ſorry for this variation; but after ſome correſpondence with Mr. Milnes and Mr. Wrightſon, which I will not now detail, I agreed to their deſire, and ſent a freſh Requiſition to the Sheriff, which they have approved.

I certainly felt mortified at the change, and thought it unadviſable; but union is of too much conſequence to the ſucceſs of an attempt on which the happineſs of the Community will be found greatly to depend, to be ſacrificed to any mere mode of proceeding; while, on the other hand, no ſacrifice to principle can ever be too great. I am,

Dear Sir, &c.

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* EARL THANET.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 18*th*, 1801.

My Lord;

A Difference of opinion reſpecting the mode of proceeding has ariſen here, which has cauſed ſome delay in bringing forward the buſineſs of a County Meeting. To accommodate matters, the Requiſition for a Previous Meeting has been given up, and it has been agreed to circulate a freſh Requiſition directly to the Sheriff to call the Freeholders together to petition for a *ſpeedy Peace.* The firſt mode I preferred, becauſe when the People feel themſelves aggrieved, and wiſh to remonſtrate, that mode ſeems beſt, *provided it be legal,* which is the moſt ſpirited, and is beſt calculated to give a popular complexion to their meaſures. But the latter mode was preferred by ſeveral of our beſt friends from motives of a cautious policy, to conciliate the new Converts to Peace. I truſt, however, that the Cauſe of Liberty will receive no hurt, or no material hurt from this change of plan. The queſtion for Peace will probably be carried by a majority ſomewhat greater than it otherwiſe would have been; and the Friends of Liberty having ſtill the lead in their hands, will be able, I hope, to carry ſome reſolution tending to promote that Cauſe. Peace will be our immediate object; it is with the People at large their firſt and moſt neceſſary want; but the ſecurity of

our National Freedom ought to be the grand and ultimate end of their exertions; and I hope in Yorkſhire they will feel it.

I believe it is not intended on this occaſion to aſk the ſignatures of any of our Noble Friends, or of Gentlemen not reſident in Yorkſhire. But if I ſhould find that the names of abſent friends, particularly thoſe of the D. of Norfolk, the D. of Northumberland, the D. of Devonſhire, or Lord G. Cavendiſh, ſhould be annexed to this new Requiſition, I will immediately avail myſelf of the power your Lordſhip has done me the honour to intruſt me with, and inſert your name with theirs.

I venture farther to expreſs my hope and earneſt wiſh that your Lordſhip will favour us with your perſonal aſſiſtance on the day of the County Meeting.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

P.S. Feb. 19th, 1801. Since the preceding letter was written, I am ſorry to inform your Lordſhip, that the rumour of a Negociation for Peace has induced the Gentlemen in the Weſt to delay their Requiſition to the Sheriff. I fear they will loſe a very favourable opportunity by their indeciſion, which I am truly ſorry for.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 20th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

THE reſult of your conſultation on the 18th I am ſorry for, becauſe I fear the preſent opportunity will be loſt by it. But I am probably leſs diſappointed and leſs dejected than you ſuppoſe I am. If the preſent opportunity be loſt, which will be the inevitable conſequence of but a ſhort delay, ſuch is the diſtreſsful and dangerous ſtate of our affairs, that another proper opportunity muſt ſoon preſent itſelf. When that time comes I hope we ſhall profit by paſt miſcarriage and diſappointment, and deviſe ſome mode of forming as ſtrong a union as we can in favour of Peace and Liberty, before any freſh ſtep be taken. I am, with great regard,

Dear Sir,

Your's moſt truly,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* R. S. MILNES, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 23d*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

TIME is precious; the dilemma we are in not likely ſoon to end. I will only ſay then, would you and your friends like

the Requiſition now ventured to be propoſed, inſtead of that for ſpeedy Peace alone? If you and they would like it, I am confident it would be acceptable in the North, and our ground would be ſtrong *. I am,

Dear Sir,

Truly your's,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER IX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* W. WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 26th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I AM glad you approve the purport of the amended Requiſition †. I am alſo very glad to find you are not without hope that on this ground we may meet with ſufficient encouragement at the Aſſizes to proceed with this

* At this time, viz. Feb. 23, 1801, a ſtrong ſuſpicion prevailed in the Country, that the myſterious circumſtances which had attended the recent reſignation of the Miniſter Pitt, covered ſome deception unfavourable to the pacific wiſhes of the Public. The peremptory language of Mr. Addington, at firſt, reſpecting the claim of ſearching neutral veſſels in the extent to which it had been lately practiced, ſeemed hardly reconcileable with a ſincere deſire of Peace; and the Northern War, added to the difficulties of that in Egypt, threatened the Nation with an accumulation of dangers from which nothing but exploits too extraordinary to be hoped from our Army in Egypt, or our Fleet in the Baltic, could reſcue it. In this ſtate of affairs, it appeared that the joint objects of Peace and the removal of Miniſters, would have afforded ground on which the Popular Party in Yorkſhire might have combated their opponents with a probability of ſucceſs.

† For this firſt amended Requiſition ſee the 11th Preliminary Paper of this Volume.

meaſure.

meaſure. From Mr. Milnes's letter I was much afraid that our friends at Leeds were ſtill too much diſpirited by the great weight of wealth and influence in the oppoſite ſcale, and that in compliance with their opinion, our friends generally in the Weſt were for poſtponing a Meeting of the County till there might be almoſt a certainty of ſucceſs. If you and they ſhould ſee reaſon to fear a defeat, after ſounding Gentlemen at the Aſſizes, I ſhall moſt willingly acquieſce in the poſtponement of this meaſure. I have taken the liberty to propoſe it in different ſhapes, becauſe I thought the general ſenſe of the Country would be with us, though we might poſſibly have a ſharp conflict to encounter, and our Petition might be oppoſed by a Counter-Petition, or a Proteſt: and becauſe with this oppoſition in view, I thought it would be very beneficial to paſs ſuch a Petition as we have to propoſe, as the ſenſe of a clear majority of the Freeholders of Yorkſhire. And I am the more inclined to expect great good might reſult to the Public, from a Petition ſo carried at a General Meeting here, becauſe I have aſſurance from authorities which I am certain are deſerving of credit, that many Counties in the Weſt, in the Neighbourhood of London, and alſo Durham and Northumberland, would follow our example. But ſtill if our friends ſhould be found unwilling to engage in this buſineſs, if there ſhould ſtill be doubt and heſitation in thoſe Gentlemen who beſt know the ſtate of opinion in the moſt populous parts of the Weſt, I wiſh to preſs the point no farther. I am perfectly ſatisfied with having

having done my duty to the beſt of my judgment, as I am ſure they alſo have done, and will do theirs.

I will only add, that if on meeting Gentlemen at York next week, you ſhould find it adviſable not to proceed, I hope when another more fit opportunity may preſent itſelf that the next propoſition of this nature may come from you, and Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Strickland. You will be certain of having my confidence and friendly concurrence, and the beſt aſſiſtance which my weakened ſtate of health and declining age will permit. I am,

With great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER X.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* THOMAS BIGGE, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *March 4th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

THE Leeds Merchants tell me, that the diſtreſs of the lower claſſes in that Diſtrict exceeds all conception. Yet to them is it owing, that Yorkſhire has ſhewn ſo much indeciſion and irreſolution. They have been ſo terribly intimidated by the violence and ſuperior influence of their High-Church Opponents, that they are incapable of looking them in the face, even when the hoſt which made them

them formidable has deſerted them completely. Our friends in that quarter ſtill pretend "it is policy to wait, and that a Meeting now would expoſe us to a certain defeat, hardly leſs deciſive than that we received in 1795." Yet "Thirty houſand Clothiers are ſaid to have petitoned for Peace at Leeds, Wakefield, and Bradford." The inconſiſtence of their ſtatement is evident, and convicts them of a daſtardly puſillanimity unworthy of Freemen. I ſhould have been little mortified, however, if theſe fears had been confined to the Leeds Merchants, and if their influence had not been felt in the indeciſion and altered conduct of ſome of thoſe friends in whom I moſt confided. But it were uſeleſs to complain; ſuch are the reverſes and diſappointments which the Public Man muſt prepare himſelf to meet, and which for the ſake of the Public, he muſt learn not only to bear, but even to ſeem not to feel; he muſt learn to ſwallow mortifications, to ſtifle reſentments, and thus preſerve himſelf in that poſture of mind, and that degree of his Aſſociates good-will which may beſt enable him to do good. And this muſt be done without a breach of ſincerity, or a dereliction of principle. This I have endeavoured to attain, and, as far as ſincerity and conſiſtency of conduct are concerned, I truſt, when you have ſeen my Correſpondence, you will think I have ſucceeded. In other reſpects I cannot flatter myſelf that I have been ſucceſsful. In Yorkſhire appearances at preſent are ſuch, I know not what to think. The Sheriff and Grand Jury are friendly to our Cauſe; and a Meeting is intended

tended to be held in the approaching Aſſize Week, at which they and ſuch other Gentlemen as can conveniently attend are expected to conſult on the propriety of calling a General Meeting of the County. This will be ſomewhat of the nature of a Previous Meeting, ſuch as I always wiſhed, *only not advertiſed* *. I therefore think I ought to attend. But after what has paſſed, I cannot be very ſanguine in my hope that good will reſult. However, Mr. Wrightſon †, leſs timid than thoſe connected with Leeds, approves what I have recommended, viz. a Petition for a ſpeedy Peace, and the employment of Miniſters who have always been friendly to Peace, as the likelieſt means to procure a good one. This is the ſenſe, but not exactly the words, and I ſuppoſe he will offer it to his Brother Jurymen. And now, my dear Sir, it is time that I thanked you

* The Editor did attend accordingly ſoon after the date of this letter, and he found the Gentlemen animated with their ancient ſpirit. They felt as they ought, what the Nation expected from Yorkſhire; and they determined that if their exertions could prevent it, thoſe expectations ſhould not be diſappointed. The local views of the Merchants were laid aſide, and a comprehenſive plan, more worthy of their efforts, was adopted in oppoſition to the new Miniſters, whoſe conduct, *at that time*, did not appear to vary much from that of their predeceſſors. In the event of a continued War, Mr. Wrightſon, Mr. Fawkes, Mr. Strickland, Mr. Wharton, and many other Country Gentlemen of ſimilar principles were reſolved to begin the long meditated movement. Freſh hopes of ſucceſs to Liberty were again entertained, and communicated by the Editor to his Correſpondents; but again thoſe hopes were daſhed by the neceſſity for ſuſpending the intended movement in conſequence of Mr. Addington's ſtrongly pacific Declaration near the end of this month.

† It has been allready acknowledged, that Mr. Wrightſon acted with the utmoſt propriety on the difficult occaſion alluded to. It would be injuſtice not to add, that the Country does not poſſeſs a Patriot on whoſe tried fidelity and firmneſs it has greater reaſon to rely.

for

for your laſt very kind letter, which breathed that friendly and affectionate regard I value ſo highly, and which to a mind in pain as mine was, is the moſt powerful and moſt grateful medicine which can be applied. I am afraid theſe anxieties of mine have cauſed me to delay, till perhaps it is too late, to inquire whether Mrs. Bigge has filled her liſt of ſponſors for the little boy. If I am not too late, I ſhould be very happy to be named as one, and in the beginning of ſummer I would promiſe to attend the ceremony.

Mrs. Wyvill begs to join me in beſt wiſhes to you, the ladies, and the children. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your ſincere and obliged friend,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *March* 21*ſt*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I Have juſt heard from Mr. Fox, in anſwer to mine of the 13th, informing him of what was agreed at York. He ſays, "He thinks it very good news." So far is he from ſeeing any objection to petitioning from the preſent ſtate of affairs, that he thinks it more expedient, if poſſible, than ever *. I

* The Editor had met Mr. Wrightſon and other friends at York, during the Aſſize Week in March, and had communicated the reſult of his conference with them to Mr. Fox, hoping the weight

I find, however, he wiſhes the form of the Requiſition altered in ſome of its expreſſions, which may be hurtful to him perſonally, as well as in a more extended political view. By to-morrow's poſt I will ſend a freſh form, freed from the expreſſions likely to do hurt. I will ſend it to you and Mr. Wrightſon; and as it will ſtill keep the former objects in view, viz. Peace and a Change of Counſels, I hope it will meet your approbation and his. I think it may be adviſable for you to burn this letter. I am,

With great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* W. WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *March 29th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

AT our late conſultation with Mr. Fawkes ſeveral circumſtances ſeemed to favour the idea, that about this time we might with effect have propoſed to the Freeholders a Petition for Peace and a Change of Miniſters. Lord Grenville had declared to the Houſe of Peers that the ſyſtem of the new Miniſters was

weight of his authority would give a more decided impulſe, and in the beſt direction to the Great Maſs which was to be moved. In a ſubſequent Number the correſpondence with Mr. Fox will explain this matter.

the

the ſame as that of the old, except only in the ſingle article of Toleration. The armament againſt the Northern Nations, which the old Miniſters had begun, was continued with equal diligence by the new, and their language on the ſubject of the neutral claims was equally peremptory and unpacific. I therefore was unwilling at that time to delay the intended Meeting of the County till the new Miniſters might have negociated, and might have failed to procure a Peace, becauſe the delay might be a long one, and it might involve the loſs of a favourable opportunity to bring forward the ſenſe of this County on the preſent ſtate of affairs. But the debate on Wedneſday laſt has thrown a new and unexpected light on the views and diſpoſition of the preſent Adminiſtration. I underſtand from the beſt authority, that Mr. Addington expreſſed in the ſtrongeſt terms his inclination to Peace, and particularly diſclaimed being bound in any reſpect to follow the ſyſtem of his Predeceſſor. From theſe circumſtances, on which we may confidently rely, my opinion is now altered; and I entirely accede to what Mr. Fawkes propoſed at York, viz. to wait till the new Miniſters ſhall have negociated, and ſhall have failed to obtain a Peace. We may look for a ſpeedy overture to France from the Cabinet of London; and poſſibly it may receive ſuch an anſwer as may ſoon finiſh the Negociation, but without effecting a Treaty of Peace. In that caſe we may ſtill be able, before the preſent Seſſion of Parliament is too far ſpent, to bring the County forward on ſtronger ground than we have

have yet had before us. And I doubt not, we are all truly ſenſible that a Meeting ſo neceſſary for the welfare of the Country ought not to be poſtponed for a day after the time when it might be held with ſucceſs *. The ſecond Form of a Requiſition, of which a copy was ſent to you, has the approbation of Mr. Fox. If, therefore, we ſhould be able to meet before the end of the preſent Seſſion, I ſuppoſe it would anſwer the purpoſe. If the Negociation ſhould be drawn into great length, it will be uſeleſs to petition till next winter, when other ground will probably come to be occupied. As I had preſſed for the meaſure of a County Meeting without delay before, I think it incumbent on me now to acknowledge my change of opinion, and to declare explicitly that I accede moſt willingly to a ſuſpenſion of our intended movement, till the reſult of the overture is known which Mr. Addington is expected immediately to make. If it meets the negative, which may be thought probable from the Miniſter's high language on the neutral claims, our proſpect of a ſucceſsful County Meeting will be clear. If it ſhould produce a Peace, it will be an advantage not to have called a Meeting. I am,

With great regard,

Dear Sir,

Moſt truly your's,

C. WYVILL.

* For this ſecond Form of a Requiſition ſee the 12th Preliminary Paper of this Volume.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXIII.

Containing the EDITOR'S *Correſpondence with* J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart. WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq; COLIN MAC LAURIN, Eſq; *the* Rev. Dr. OGLE, Dean *of* Wincheſter, JAMES MARTIN, Eſq; M. P. *and* THOMAS WALKER, Eſq; *from the Beginning of April*, 1801, *to nearly the End of January*, 1802.

LETTER I.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *April* 2, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

THE delay of Mr. Grey's motion will no doubt have retarded your proceedings, and I think it probable that the overtures lately made by Miniſters to the enemy will for a time ſuſpend them. I do not at leaſt expect that men who have ſhown themſelves ſo willing to admit the moſt trifling pretences for delay, will move a Petition for Peace at the moment our Cabinet is taking meaſures to procure it.

The Public Mind in theſe parts, eſpecially in our Sea Ports, is eagerly waiting for intelligence from the Baltic. Their hopes are very ſanguine, (though the delay of intelligence

produces ſome mixture of alarm) and any thing ſhort of deciſive ſucceſs againſt Denmark at leaſt, will occaſion a great depreſſion.

The anſwer *believed* to be returned to our offers by the Firſt Conſul "that he can only treat jointly with his Allies" has made a conſiderable impreſſion, as well as the proſpect of failure againſt Egypt. In ſhort, men are opening their eyes to the ſituation of the Country; but I cannot add that they ſeem fully to ſee the origin of the evil, or to feel the outrages offered to Popular Rights by the meaſures of Pitt's adminiſtration. On this head I deſpair of ſeeing the Country act as it becomes Free Men. The indignation which may be excited * by National Ruin may overturn the ſyſtem of Abuſes, and with it the whole ſtructure of the Government, but that which we wiſh to ſee, a legal, temperate, and wiſe Reform of Abuſes; a Reform that would ſtrengthen and continue our Conſtitution, not overthrow it, I deſpair of beholding.

I ſhould have been happy to viſit Burton; but I am not able to ſtir from home. I have not lately heard from Benton, nor do I know our friend's engagements.

Sir, our beſt wiſhes.

Your s, &c.

J. R. FENWICK.

* Some ſentences in this letter, either of leſs importance, or leſs cloſely connected with the principal ſubject, have been omitted. A ſimilar omiſſion has been thought proper in the third letter of this Number. Other inſtances of omiſſion, poſſibly, might be found, which, through inadvertence, have not been acknowledged.

LETTER

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* J. R. FENWICK, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *April 7th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

YOU judged rightly in your's of the 2d inſt. that our movements would be ſuſpended in Yorkſhire; and my letter about the ſame date would communicate nothing which you had not foreſeen. All the good which I dare to hope has reſulted from a correſpondence of four months, in which I laboured hard, and frequently met with diſappointment and mortification, is only this, that we have come to a more perfect underſtanding of the principles held by each of us, and are prepared to ſeize the next opportunity, and act together with mutual confidence. We have gained ſtrength, becauſe we are better compacted; but we have loſt time, which was invaluable, and never can be retrieved *. The tendency to a Revolution now is too evident

* The conqueſt of Egypt by Abercrombie and Hutchinſon, the ſucceſs which crowned the ſkill and bravery of Nelſon at Copenhagen, and ſtill more the wiſdom of his ſubſequent conduct at Carlſcroon and Revel, enabled the new Adminiſtration to pacify the Northern Powers, and to extort from Bonaparte conditions of Peace, which, though they left the power of France immenſely aggrandized and formidable to every Nation in Europe, were yet acceptable to Britain. In the view of our foreign relations, the Peace of Amiens gave us neither honour nor ſecurity; but at home it reſtored tranquillity, and diſperſed the danger of a Revolution. The Friends of their Country hailed the return of Peace; but the precarious ſtate to which the Conſtitution was reduced filled their minds with anxiety.

to be doubted; and I fear it will be found too ſtrong and deciſive to be ſtopt, or turned aſide by any efforts of the Gentry. Yet never wholly deſpairing, I ſhall feel it my duty, when occaſion calls, and the Yorkſhire Gentlemen are diſpoſed to meet, to ſtand forth, and co-operate with them. I have not the leaſt doubt, that with leſs hope, or perhaps none, you will feel and act upon the impulſe of the moſt generous Patriotiſm, and command the veneration of all who can comprehend and eſteem, as they ought, great talents united with the pureſt virtue. In ſpite of paltry jealouſies, or timidity, or narrow views of intereſt, you muſt and will be found in your proper place, when the time for action is me.

I am told from London, that the King remains weak in body and mind, and unable to judge of public affairs. How daring is it in thoſe who uſe his name, in ſuch a condition, to carry the moſt violent meaſures through Parliament, and paſs them into laws!

Adieu, my dear Sir. Accept our beſt wiſhes to you and Mrs. Fenwick, and believe me with the greateſt truth,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER III.

From J. R. Fenwick, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. Wyvill.

My Dear Sir,

AS Peace was to be the prominent feature in your Petition, there can, I think, be no doubt of the propriety of deferring your proceedings until the reſult of the preſent Negociations be known. Had your Aſſociates viewed the ſtate of the Nation and our Grievances on more enlarged principles, it needed not to have ſtopped you; but ſuch is the effect of taking up the queſtion on narrow grounds, that Miniſters can at any time baffle you by manifeſting a deſire for Peace. They muſt be as incapable of the little tricks of home policy as they are of conducting the affairs of a Great People, if they do not defeat all the efforts of the Popular Party while they purſue their preſent ſyſtem. I am aware that it is not in your power to produce a change of ſyſtem in your friends; and, therefore, while I ſee you doing all that prudence can ſuggeſt, and unwearied perſeverance accompliſh, I can only regret that you are doomed to exert them in a ſituation where defeat is unavoidable. I wiſh you may derive the increaſe of force which you expect from delay; I rather fear you will not. It can hardly be ſuppoſed that Bonaparte will treat without his Allies, or will conſent to abandon Egypt. If he inſiſts on theſe points, and the Negociation goes off upon it, is the pride of the

Nation ſufficiently lowered for the bulk of the People to blame Miniſters for not acceding to the eſtabliſhment of a Colony, from whence it has been ſuppoſed our Eaſtern Poſſeſſions may be attacked with ſucceſs, or for refuſing to yield up the right of ſearching Convoys, and ſeizing the Enemy's property in neutral ſhips? Theſe Rights have been very generally conſidered as eſſential to the maintenance of our naval ſuperiority, and on that ſuperiority our foreign commerce and home manufactures have been ſuppoſed to depend. I know that theſe poſitions may be controverted; I believe them to be in a great meaſure untrue, but they form the national creed, and nothing but neceſſity, immediate neceſſity, will alter that belief. I muſt confeſs, therefore, that I think nothing will open the eyes of the People but the miſcarriage of our Expedition againſt the Northern Powers, or the experience that even victory over their naval forces is not ſufficient to reduce them to the neceſſity of ſueing for Peace. Whether we are to fail in the attack altogether, or in part, a few days will ſhow; but if the Confederates uſe their reſources with prudence, and continue firm and united under partial reverſes, I think the iſſue cannot be favourable. When all hopes of reducing the Enemy to the terms of the Cabinet have vaniſhed, the deſpondency of the Country will render almoſt any conditions of Peace acceptable, and ſacrifices will be conſented to, which would not now be heard with patience. Let us hope that in

that hour of humiliation the People will not be led away by a blind ſpirit of reſentment againſt their Rulers, but will coolly inquire into the ſource of our evils, and adopt the remedies which the Conſtitutionfurniſhes.

Mr. Grey's laſt ſpeech on moving an Inquiry into the State of the Nation, is, I think, the beſt I ever remember of his: Mr. Fox's, though ill reported, was a truly noble one. If the Public will ſhut its ears, it has no excuſe.

Mrs. Fenwick joins in all that is kind to you all. Believe me,

My dear Sir,

Very truly your's,

J. R. FENWICK.

LETTER IV.

From Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart. *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MANY thanks to you, my dear Sir, for your letter. I much fear that the miſchief already done to the Conſtitution is paſt remedy, at leaſt till ſome dreadful calamity ſhall remove the apathy which has taken poſſeſſion of the bulk of the Nation. What our preſent famine may do I know not, but rather expect a Revolution from it than a Renovation. Deſpotiſm or Anarchy muſt be the order of the day.

The preſent Adminiſtration, if it can be called one, is ſuppoſed to be formed for the ſole purpoſe of treating with Bonaparte; and

then we ſhall return to our fomer Maſters. I do not myſelf expect Peace; we are not ſufficiently humbled to accept the terms which will be offered to us; and certainly the *Chief Conſul* knows his preſent ſtrength and our weakneſs too well to offer us advantageous ones. His arms are at liberty, and in all probability Invaſion will follow, or at leaſt be attempted. The very attempt will greatly ſhock, if not overturn all our ideal riches,—Bank Paper and Bankers' Notes;—and we are at preſent without an *efficient Army* to ſave us, as the Military are diſperſed to keep the hungry *quiet*. I will give every credit to the Yorkſhire Gentry; their public ſpirit and knowledge of the Conſtitution have ever taken the lead; but alas! what can one County do? and unleſs they are ſupported by the reſt, a weak attack will be a victory to their opponents *.

I am happy to hear that your family's health has not ſuffered in this extraordinary ſeaſon. Believe me

Your's ſincerely,

CECIL WRAY.

16*th April*, 1801.

* Such were the apprehenſions of this enlightened Patriot, at this period of unexampled danger from abroad, and gloomy diſcontent at home, ere the proſpect of Peace was ſufficiently opened to the view of the Nation. In the mean time, a pauſe of doubt and hope, mingled with fear, held in mute ſuſpenſe that Body of Gentlemen in Yorkſhire, who, in the event of a continued War, were prepared, at laſt, to interpoſe their united remonſtrance in favour of Peace and Public Liberty.

LETTER

LETTER V.

From WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

CUSWORTH, *June 14th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I HAVE read with the greateſt ſatisfaction your Letter in Anſwer to Mr. Cartwright †. In my judgment, you have put the queſtion of Reform on its true baſis, and if good ſenſe and fair reaſoning can at this moment of infatuation have any effect on the public mind, much good may be expected from it. But every hour brings with it diminiſhed hope, and freſh grounds of deſpair. I admire the manner in which you have treated the queſtion of Party; it is, in truth, another word for Union, and the more the means of Corruption are increaſed, the more neceſſary it is that the means of reſiſtance ſhould be ſyſtematic. But I am afraid ſome of the Friends of Reform, in the exceſs of their zeal, have done more to injure the cauſe than its bittereſt enemies could have done: I mean to allude to the unbounded expectations of the Friends of Univerſal Suffrage, and the unguarded expreſſions of Mr. H. Tooke ‡, which

† For the Letter here alluded to, ſee the Appendix to the 4th Volume of Political Papers.

‡ The Editor's teſtimony concerning the alleged delinquency of Mr. H. Tooke was delivered upon oath, on that Gentleman's Trial for High-Treaſon in 1794; and to what he then ſwore, he has nothing to add. Reſpecting the zeal and the intrepidity of Mr. H. Tooke as a Reformer, or his eloquence as a Speaker, or his acuteneſs and inventive ſagacity as a Grammarian, or his force and ſeverity as a Political Writer, there is, and there can be but one opinion.

have

have diffuſed a degree of ſuſpicion and diſtruſt as to the quantum of Reform wiſhed for. I really think it is impoſſible to have ſtated what the Public ought to do, in fewer words or better manner than you have done; but the bite of the Tarantula is, I fear, too deep to be cured by any muſic. I am,

Dear Sir,

With great eſteem,

Your's faithfully,

W. WRIGHTSON.

Extract *of* LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* WILLIAM WRIGHTSON, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *June 19th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

IT gives me the greateſt pleaſure to find that the Letter to Major Cartwright meets with the approbation of the Friends of the Country. I am particularly happy in your approbation, which you have expreſſed with ſo much force; and though your commendation evidences the partiality of a Friend, there is no one who would not with me feel the higheſt gratification from that very conſideration.

I will only add, that I entirely agree with you in lamenting the infatuation of our Countrymen who ſo obſtinately perſevere in a courſe of impolitic meaſures, which threaten nothing leſs than National Ruin, but that I cannot

cannot deſpair of the Public Weal, ſo long as the Friends of their Country adhere to thoſe principles which combine ſafety to property, with the preſervation of our National Freedom.

With my beſt wiſhes for the health and happineſs of you and your's, I conclude, and am ever, dear Sir,

Your's moſt cordially,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER VII.

From Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart. *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

PERMIT me, dear Sir, to expreſs my ſincere acknowledgments for the pleaſure I have received in the peruſal of your Letter to Mr. Cartwright. Should Reform of the Conſtitution ever take place, it muſt be on your mild, but determined meaſures, though God knows I have long deſpaired. The apathy, want of activity, and above all, the timidity which has ſeized all kinds of Gentry, have thrown the proſpect to a vaſt diſtance.

Peace is an object devoutly to be wiſhed; and ſtill Peace will throw Reform to a much greater improbability.

It will give me great pleaſure to take a ride from Harrogate to Burton this ſummer. I think the accounts I receive of our friend at Copgrove are as good as I have expected.

Believe me your's ſincerely,

CECIL WRAY.

SUMMER CASTLE, 28*th June*.

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* Sir CECIL WRAY, Bart.

BURTON-HALL, *July* 11*th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Haſten to expreſs to you the pleaſure I feel on finding you ſo much approve my Letter to Major Cartwright. Mr. Fox alſo has ſignified to me his *entire approbation of the whole of it*, After receiving the ſanction of approbation from the firſt Stateſman of our Country, and one of its moſt enlightened, upright, and impartial Patriots, I have nothing farther to wiſh perſonally; but for the Public Good I moſt earneſtly wiſh it may help to ſoften prejudices, and bring back the Nation to that love of Rational Liberty which was once its honourable characteriſtic. If this can be done at all, it can only be done by reaſon and moderation, united with firmneſs and zeal. But I am not vain enough to expect any great effect from ſo ſlight a performance: for I alſo deſpond, as you do, and expect nothing leſs than ruin of the Conſtitution, unleſs events ſhould diſpoſe the Nation to liſten to the doctrine of Conſtitutional Liberty. In that caſe, even ſuch ſlight performances may be of uſe.

Believe me, dear Sir, with great regard,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

Extract *of* LETTER IX.

From J. R. FENWICK, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DURHAM, *July 10th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Received a parcel with copies of your Anſwer to Major Cartwright. I need not ſay that I agree with you in the inexpediency of inſiſting on Univerſal Suffrage at this time, and indeed in the evils which ſuch a ſyſtem would produce in the preſent ſtate of this Country. But though I agree with the ſentiments you expreſs in your Pamphlet, I do not the leſs lament the occaſion which made it neceſſary for you to reſume the ſubject of Politics. From a regard to your individual happineſs, I regret it, being convinced that it muſt terminate in diſappointment; but I have alſo a reaſon of a public nature, in which, perhaps, you will not coincide with me. It ſeems to me that too much apathy prevails in the People for any addreſs to them in favour of Conſtitutional Liberty to produce any good; and experience has ſhown that Miniſters are ever ready, when the queſtion of Reform is agitated, to take advantage of the fears of the Alarmiſts, and to ground ſome new encroachment on the National Liberties on the ſuppoſed ſpirit of Innovation. Every effort on the Popular ſide has produced ſome meaſure of this deſcription, ſo that under the impoſſibility of combating them with effect, ſilence ſeems to be the beſt policy. I truſt it is not indolence which perſuades me of this; for though I will not deny

deny that I feel political indolence grow faſt upon me, a revival of hope would immediately diſſipate it. *

Mrs. Fenwick unites in all that is friendly to you all.

Your's very truly,

J. R. FENWICK.

* In the interval of doubt and ſuſpenſe which occurred between the firſt intimation of a change in the political ſyſtem of the Court and the ſignature of the Preliminary Articles of Peace, an amicable diſcuſſion took place between the Editor and that indefatigable Patriot, Major Cartwright. Each of theſe Correſpondents conceived it might poſſibly happen, that the new Miniſter, however deſirous of concluding the War, might not be able to effect his purpoſe; and each of them conſidered a failure of the Negociation for Peace as an event moſt likely to call forth the indignation of a diſappointed Public. In theſe circumſtances, in March, 1801, the intrepid Advocate of the Right of Perſonal Repreſentation addreſſed to the Editor his plea for a National Aſſociation, with his reaſons for the adoption of that principle as the ground of it. The Editor was unwilling to diſcourage his efforts for a purpoſe which he approved; but he felt it to be his duty to ſtate his reaſons, on the 1ſt of May, 1801, for preferring a more limited principle of Union. But when the Preliminaries of Peace were ſigned, it ceaſed to be a debateable queſtion, whether a National Aſſociation could be formed either on this principle, or on that.

The difference of ſentiment, however, which exiſted between Dr. Fenwick and the Editor, on the part taken by him at this time, was probably much leſs than his excellent friend ſuppoſed. The Editor indeed thought that the formation of a National Aſſociation in favour of Reform was highly deſirable, and that the diſcuſſion of the principle on which it ought to be formed could not be unſeaſonable during a pauſe which might ſoon be ended by the failure of Peace, and a more determined endeavour of the Nation to effect a Redreſs of Abuſes. But he fully agreed with his friend in deprecating unconnected and premature movements of the Reforming Bodies; more eſpecially of thoſe whoſe principle of Perſonal Repreſentation had excited alarm; and he had previouſly ſtated to the worthy Major Cartwright, the diſſervice to the Cauſe of Reform which it was reaſonable to apprehend from the efforts made in the month of March, 1801, by the Societies alluded to, whoſe movement at that time actually produced pernicious conſequences ſimilar to thoſe which his ſagacious friend apprehended, not knowing that ſuch efforts had been made.

See the Editor's Correſpondence with Major Cartwright in the following Number, particularly Letter VI.

LETTER

LETTER X.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* COLIN MAC LAURIN, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Auguſt 5th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

MY beſt compliments attend you and Dr. Anderſon, with my earneſt wiſhes for the ſucceſs of your endeavours to ſupport the Cauſe of Liberty in Scotland. Never was that Cauſe in England, as well as Scotland, in greater danger; never were its enemies more numerous, more powerful, or more determined; and never were its friends more weakened by a deſpondence little ſhort of abſolute deſpair. But I applaud the vigour of you, Sir, and your friends, who, though ſurrounded by the Foes of Freedom, and almoſt overpowered by them, ſtill maintain the generous conflict, and encourage us in the North of England to maintain it by the hope of your aſſiſtance and co-operation. Events have produced the dejection I lament; and events may rouze the Nation from its preſent ſtupefaction to the zeal and activity I wiſh to witneſs. Whenever appearances of ſo deſirable a change are diſcovered in the North of England, be aſſured I ſhall not fail to appriſe you of it *. In the mean-time, I am, with great eſteem,

Dear Sir,

Moſt ſincerely your's,

C. WYVILL.

* At Dryburgh Abbey, not long before the date of this letter, the Editor's acquaintance with Mr. Mac Laurin and Dr. Anderſon commenced: with Mr. Mac Laurin, the reſpectable ſon of a reſpectable father, Lord Dreghorn of the Court of Seſſion in Scotland,

LETTER XI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* COLIN MAC LAURIN, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *Auguſt 25th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I Have to return you many thanks for your obliging letter of the 15th inſtant, and alſo the packet containing a copy of your Father's Works, part of which I have read with great pleaſure, and with that feeling of a congenial mind which inſures a general concurrence and approbation of the reſt.

I am glad to find that my Political Papers, arriving at a time when you were ſurrounded with all that could afflict a worthy and a feeling heart, were yet able in ſome degree to ſooth and compoſe you. And that your private griefs ſhould thus be mitigated by the conſideration of Papers reſpecting paſt ſtruggles for Public Liberty, is to me a ſtrong proof of a generous and ſincere attachment to that Cauſe which involves in it the welfare and the moral dignity of mankind. And when the proper time is come for acting upon thoſe principles, I have the fulleſt aſſurance that you will act upon them with that energy

Scotland, and marked, like his father, by the warmth of his zeal for Public Freedom: Dr. Anderſon, the Biographer of Smollet, the friend of Lord Buchan, and a cool and ſteady ſupporter of the Cauſe of the People. The Editor's ſhare of his correſpondence with Mr. Mac Laurin is laid before the Public, unaccompanied by the letters of his Correſpondent, from no wiſh to conceal them. The ſevere illneſs of Mr. Mac Laurin forbade, and the Editor fears will continue to forbid an appplication to him for permiſſion to publiſh them.

which

which your Father poſſeſſed, and would have exerted, if he had not been prevented by the decencies of his ſtation.

I quite agree with you, Sir, and Dr. Anderſon, in thinking highly of A. B*; and I truſt that in ſome future day the Public will be indebted to him in a great degree for the reſtoration of Liberty. On a late occaſion, my opinion differed from his on the means of effecting this reſtoration; and I felt it to be my duty not to court the aſſiſtance of C. D. at a Meeting of this County to petition for Peace, by engaging to paſs by Reform in total ſilence, as A. B. wiſhed. Since our Meeting at Dryburgh, I had the pleaſure to ſpend a day with A. B. in E. On diſcuſſing the point of difference between us in friendly converſation, I believe he was convinced I could not have acted otherwiſe than I did without impropriety: and I certainly was convinced that A. B's intentions were perfectly pure and honourable, though I continue to think that whenever the People meet in a proper and effective manner, *Peace alone* ought not to be their object; but Peace connected with ſuch meaſures as may have the beſt tendency to promote the Cauſe of Liberty. Their Meetings will be miſerably deficient, if when Peace is their immediate

* The Editor feels here, on behalf of the perſons alluded to under theſe letters, A. B, &c. the ſame difficulty which ſeveral of his moſt reſpectable friends objected to the publication of their Correſpondence, viz. that the events are too recent, and the ſubſiſting prejudices and animoſities are too ſtrong to admit the publication of ſome Correſpondence, however innocent, or of ſome names, however honoured, without perſonal inconvenience and diſadvantage alſo to the Public. This is the only reaſon why the names here meant are concealed under the cover of the letters A. B, &c.

demand, they do not at the ſame time point to the reſtoration of Popular Rights, and the ſecurity of National Liberty as the ultimate object of their wiſhes.

With every good one to you and your's, I remain, Dear Sir, Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XII.

From the Rev. Dr. OGLE, Dean *of* Wincheſter, *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

KIRKLEY, *Auguſt 27th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

ACCEPT my beſt thanks for your preſent of three Volumes of your Political Papers, which I ſhall value not only on their own account, but on your's, and I will hope that, though I may be too old to witneſs their good effect, yet that poſterity and my children may; as it ſurely muſt be of ſervice to them to find that there have been Patriots, and to ſee that they had a legitimate and a defenſible cauſe *.

When

* It has been truly obſerved, that for ſome ages the Clergy throughout Chriſtendom, whether Proteſtants or Catholics, have been more learned and more exemplary by the decency of their conduct than their Predeceſſors before the Reformation. And it might have been juſtly remarked of the Clergy of the Engliſh Church, that ſince they have been freed from the reſtraint of celibacy, and admitted to ſhare the grand privilege of a Citizen, the Right of Parliamentary Election, they have gradually diveſted themſelves of the narrow prejudices of their corporate condition, and have learned to feel, not only as Miniſters of the Church, but as Huſbands, Fathers, and Members of the Community. Hence the patriotic character is frequently found among our liberal

When you ſpoke to me of the deſire of the Publiſhers of the Biographia Britannica to have the Article of Sir George Savile ſupplied, I conſidered it only as a ſhort affair, to which, though my memory and knowledge of political facts were not equal, yet my intimate knowledge of his family and private virtues might in theſe reſpects enable me to prevent

beral and enlightened Clergy, and is not unkown even to thoſe higher ſtations in the Church, which are leaſt favourable to the growth of the Public Virtues. In the age of our great Revolution, the names of Tilllotſon and Burnet, of Stillingfleet and Hough, of Fleetwood and Tenniſon, &c. are conſpicuous in the Liſt of Patriots, to whom the Nation owes the preſervation of its Rights, and the Church is indebted for its exiſtence, and for the honour of having adopted, however imperfectly, the principles of toleration. In the ſubſequent age, men unapt to praiſe, and partial neither to our Religion, nor to its Miniſters, could ſpy deſert even in a Biſhop, and with candour could acknowledge it. Pope commended the decency of Secker, the heart of Rundle, the candid manners of Benſon, and with peculiar emphaſis he extolled the character of Biſhop Berkley, adorned, as he allowed, with every virtue under heaven. With his other great qualities, no doubt, this philanthropic Biſhop poſſeſſed, in a high degree, the patriotic virtues. But the praiſe of Pope might have been beſtowed on the patriotiſm of another cotemporary Biſhop, with more peculiar propriety. In Biſhop Hoadley, whom he choſe to overlook, he might have praiſed, with truth, the undaunted friend and able Advocate of the ſyſtem of Tolerant Religion, and of mild and equitable Government, which Tillotſon, &c. had brought in. Swift, who then filled a ſtation of inferior dignity in the Church of Ireland, poſſeſſed, like Hoadley, a warm zeal for the Rights and Liberties of the People, without his attachment to the Rights of Conſcience. Yet, on the patriotic exertions of Dean Swift, in oppoſition to the oppreſſive meaſures of Government in Ireland, the praiſe of Pope is moſt appropriate. "The Rights a Court attack'd, a Poet ſav'd."

In the preſent age, the ſame liberal and manly ſpirit has manifeſted itſelf among the Dignitaries of our Church; and the names of Law and Blackburne, of Shipley and Watſon, cannot be pronounced by the intelligent Friend of Liberty without a ſentiment of grateful reſpect to men diſtinguiſhed by their talents and virtues, and eſpecially by their zeal in defence of the principles of Civil Liberty, as the baſis, when duly conſolidated with Religion, on which alone the Moraliſt can hope to build the ſuper-

any material miſtake; with that view I wrote to David Hartley, who lived much with him, and was acquainted with the tranſactions in which he was engaged; but I have received no anſwer as yet. *Perhaps he ſtays to write his life himſelf*, for he is fond of writing. However, unleſs I had theſe arranged by ſomebody acquainted with the circumſtances, I could,

ſtructure of National happineſs, and the moral improvement of our kind. To theſe venerable names that of Dean Ogle may be added with juſtice as a Patriot Dignitary of our Church, diſtinguiſhed by his intrepid courage, and his diſintereſted zeal in the ſame Cauſe of Liberty and Virtue. In middle age he had attained that rank in the Church in which he died. By his ſtation as Clerk of the Cloſet, he was often in the preſence of his Sovereign; and he ſtood well in his eſteem; by his marriage with the good, the meek, and the pious daughter of Biſhop Thomas, of Wincheſter, he had ſecured his good offices, and the favourable wiſhes of the other Biſhops; and thus his road to the higheſt promotion was open, if his attachment to Juſtice and Liberty had not proved an inſuperable bar. About this period of his life the unfortunate attempt was made by our Government to compel the American Colonies to ſubmit unconditionally to the power of Britain, and to renounce the Right of taxing themſelves by their Repreſentative Aſſemblies, to which, by the principles of our Conſtitution and their own, they were intitled, and which in practice they had excluſively enjoyed for ages. The attempt excited the indignation of the worthy Dean, and called forth his unqualified condemnation. He was adviſed and requeſted to be ſilent; and the aſſurance of a mitre in a ſhort time, and of a ſubſequent tranſlation to the higher and richer See of Durham, was held forth as the reward of his diſcreet compliance. The intrepid Dean ſpurned the propoſal, and never ceaſed to reprobate that fatal Civil War. Many years after this virtuous ſacrifice to conſcience, the new and oppreſſive ſyſtem of Government which was introduced by Mr Pitt in 1792, again called forth the oppoſition of this diſintereſted Friend of Popular Rights. With his uſual frankneſs and energy he ſtill maintained the genuine principles of our Conſtitution; and though he was ſurrounded by men who watched his words, and were eager to catch up any ſtrong expreſſion which might fall from his lips, yet were they afraid to grapple with the united wit and courage of the Patriotic Dean. Reduced by degrees to a ſtate of total blindneſs, he perſevered in his principles of Honour and Freedom to the laſt, and died in 1803, lamented by the Friends of his Country.

N. B. The particular circumſtances relating to the offer of a mitre were mentioned to the Editor by the Dean himſelf.

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if ever ſo willing, do nothing to the purpoſe. I never made political events my ſtudy, and I am now too old to begin.

The ſpirit and principles of our Conſtitution, I hope I never ſhall forget, or, if *blind*, ſhall *blindly* adhere to them. When I uſe the word blind, I ought to ſay that it is with great difficulty I write this letter. I think myſelf threatened with blindneſs, particularly this morning, and muſt get my ſon to read what I have written over to me, for I cannot read it myſelf; but I hope you will ſee that I am willing to further the plan, and will for that purpoſe conſult ſome of his family as well as Hartley; and we ſhall, I hope, at leaſt be able to propoſe an Article not derogatory to his character, or to the Cauſe of Liberty. Lord Buchan does me too much honour to impoſe upon me the taſk of becoming an Author, a character which I have ſtudiouſly avoided all my life, contenting myſelf with openly profeſſing my principles, which, if more people would do, it would be better for us all; at leaſt, we ſhould count more noſes.

You ſhall hear from me again when I receive any anſwer from my friends on this ſubject. In the mean time give me leave to aſſure you that I am, with great eſteem,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and obedient ſervant,

N. OGLE.

P. S. My ſon and family deſire to preſent their compliments to you. Mr. Sheridan, who is now with me, deſires his compliments.

LETTER XIII.

From the Rev. Dr. OGLE *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

KIRKLEY, *Oct. 2d*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

I Have at laſt received an anſwer from David Hartley, who (after pondering ſufficiently) ſeems to think, (and I believe with juſtice) that Sir George Savile's character is not an eaſy or inviting ſubject for biographical hiſtory; his character was certainly that of private virtue; he was not formed for politics, as I have often heard him ſay; publicity was what he ſtudiouſly avoided, and though his family, his fortune, and his amiable character placed him in the firſt ranks of Society, yet he never courted, but rather avoided popularity. His private education, which was only intended by his father to make him a virtuous man and a worthy Gentleman, (in which his father indeed moſt completely ſucceeded) contributed to foſter his natural modeſty and his averſion to the purſuit of fame, as fame. Senſible of the ſituation in which he was placed, as a Repreſentative of the great County of York, he was never deficient in his public duty, for he was a ſteady Friend to the Rights and Liberties of the Engliſh Conſtitution, which he well underſtood, and ever attended to.

He brought into Parliament, and carried the Nullum Tempus Act. He was conſtant in oppoſition to the principles and conduct of the American

American War. He always avoided voting on Eaſt-India queſtions, having a ſettled averſion to our management of affairs in that Country. And the laſt act of his public life was a ſtrenuous exertion for the Reform of Parliamentary Corruption. Other things might be mentioned, ſuch as his forming and commanding one of the beſt Militia Regiments in the Kingdom, to which he attended with zeal and aſſiduity. His attention to the internal Navigation and Trade of the County of York, and his more than common acquaintance with the philoſophical principles of Arts and Manufactures. His private virtues and charities, which were indeed private, I ſhall not now attempt to relate.

On theſe accounts he well deſerves to be mentioned with reſpect in the Biographia Britannica; and it is favourable to the Cauſe of Virtue and Civil Liberty, that Poſterity ſhould not forget what part was taken by ſo virtuous and independent a man in queſtions of the greateſt moment. Therefore when I have the honour of waiting on you at Burton, which I fully intend after my reſidence at Durham is finiſhed, we will put together ſuch circumſtances as may, at leaſt, not leave Dr. Gregory ignorant of his character. My eyes and hands are ſo weak that I am obliged to make uſe of my daughter as an Amanuenſis.

I beg to preſent my compliments to Mrs. Wyvill and your family, and am,

Dear Sir, with much eſteem,

Your faithful and obedient ſervant,

 N. OGLE.

LETTER XIV.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the* Rev. Dr. Ogle, Dean *of* Wincheſter.

Hartlepool, *Oct. 7th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

BY the laſt poſt I received here the favour of your letter of the 2d inſtant, directed to Burton, and it was with great pleaſure I learned from it that the ſlowneſs and heſitation of Mr. Hartley had not diſcouraged your zeal to do juſtice to the memory of Sir George Savile. I ſhall be moſt happy to have the honour of ſeeing you at Burton, after your reſidence at Durham; and I think I ſhall be able to contribute ſome few particulars reſpecting his ſentiments and conduct of leſs importance than thoſe mentioned in your your letter, but which will help to fill up the outline of his character. The additional information expected from Mr. Fox, I hope, may be procured by Mr. Sheridan before your intended viſit to Burton, and then, probably, all the materials to be wiſhed for will have been obtained for completing the biographical account of our much-honoured Friend.

I certainly agree with you in thinking that there were among his cotemporaries men ſuperior to him in the powers of oratory, and fitter to buſtle forward in the ſtruggle for either power or popularity.* But to his private

* Sir George Savile's diſregard of Power was manifeſted at an early period of his political life; and it continued to the cloſe of it invariably the ſame. When the firſt Adminiſtration of Lord Rockingham

private virtues, and his reſpectable talents as a Public Man, he added that uniform and diſintereſted patriotiſm which is ſo rarely to be found in his, or any ſtation, declining power, renouncing popularity, and devoting himſelf to perform his duty to the Public. This is the peculiar praiſe of Sir George Savile; and, in my opinion, to have deſerved this praiſe, places him above thoſe men of more ſplendid talents, who attained higher ſituations and more extended celebrity, but not without ſome inconſiſtencies of conduct, ſome deviations from that virtue which conſtitutes the higheſt degree of perſonal merit.

In ſaying this, I only utter ſentiments which are your own, and commend virtues which you long have practiſed. And permit me, dear Sir, to add, that I know no man fitter than yourſelf to do honour to the memory of Sir George Savile; not becauſe you were his friend and relation, not becauſe your political principles were the ſame, but becauſe

Rockingham was forming in 1766. It was propoſed, as the Editor has underſtood, that Sir G. Savile ſhould be appointed one of the Secretaries of State: he declined the offer, obſerving, that he probably could aſſiſt the Friends of their Country better by not accepting it. Afterwards, by his motion for repealing certain penal laws againſt the Catholics, he incurred the hatred of a numerous Claſs of the People. He was even forced by the rage of an intolerant Populace, for a ſhort time to withdraw from his Houſe in London, which was fired on this ſhameful occaſion, but not conſumed. Sir G. Savile, though ill ſupported by men in power, continued to animate the Parliament; and his efforts were ſucceſsful. The Parliament withſtood the fury of the mob; and the extenſion of toleration, which Sir G. Savile had benevolently propoſed, was accompliſhed. Other inſtances of ſimilar conduct might be adduced; but this is ſufficient to mark the character of a Patriot reſolute to perform his duty, though loſs of popular eſteem, and though perſonal danger might attend the performance.

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the praiſe which is due to the moſt diſtinguiſhed Patriot of his age will come well from the man who has himſelf ſacrificed ſo much to conſcience, and to ſupport the Conſtitutional Rights of his Countrymen.

I beg my compliments to the Ladies, and to Mr. Sheridan †, and remain,

Dear Sir, with great eſteem,

Moſt faithfully your's,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XV.

From JAMES MARTIN, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

OVERBURY, *near* TEWKESBURY,
Wed. 20th Jan. 1802.

My Dear Sir,

HAVING left London before Chriſtmas for the Receſs, your favour of the 16th has been forwarded to me. I feel myſelf much flattered by your kind remembrance, and am greatly obliged by the information you are ſo good to communicate. I wiſh that there were more Members of Parliament of the ſame honourable ſentiments with Mr. Grey. In regard to the ſupport of, or oppoſition to any Miniſter, my idea is perhaps

† By marriage the ſon-in-law of Dean Ogle, Mr. Sheridan was ſtill more nearly allied to him by his congenial ſentiments of honour, and his principles of Liberty. Admired by his friends, and dreaded by his opponents for his uncommon powers of wit and argument in debate, he deſerves the ſtill more uncommon praiſe of uniform conſiſtency in his political conduct. The Editor with pleaſure ſeizes this opportunity to expreſs his high eſteem of Mr. Sheridan as a Public Man unalterably attached to Liberty on the principles of the Conſtitution.

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ſingular; but I have never ſeen any reaſon to alter it. To uſe rather an ordinary expreſſion, I am againſt ſupport or oppoſition in *the lump*. If I think a Miniſter upon the whole a bad one, I will readily vote for his removal; but if ſuch motion ſhould not be attended with ſucceſs, I will ſupport any good meaſure that he may bring forward, though I diſapprove his general conduct; and ſo on the contrary, if the beſt Miniſter ſhould propoſe any thing pernicious to the Country, I would oppoſe it with as much earneſtneſs as I would if it were propoſed by a bad Miniſter. If ſuch conduct is improper, I do not underſtand the propriety of calling the Houſe of Commons part of the general *Council* of the Nation. If Mr. Grey ſhould bring forward any motion for a Reform in Parliament, I ſhall certainly give my vote in his favour, though it ſhould not go ſo far as I might wiſh; but in this caſe I think any ſtep towards the improvement of the Repreſentation muſt be beneficial.

I am much honoured, my good Sir, by your kind inquiry after my family. Thank GOD we all enjoy good health. I am very lame; but we muſt expect to feel the advances of age in ſome way or other.

We all join in requeſting you, Sir, to accept our very beſt reſpects, and I beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf, with ſincere eſteem,

Your very faithful and obedient ſervant,

JAMES MARTIN.*

* The publication of this letter was thought deſirable, not to explain the principles of this diſtinguiſhed Reformer; for they have been long aſcertained by the ſureſt proof, the integrity of his

LETTER XVI.

From THOMAS WALKER, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONGFORD, *near* MANCHESTER,
16*th of Jan.* 1802.

Dear Sir,

I Have been prevented, partly by indiſpoſition, from ſooner acknowledging the receipt of a dozen copies of your excellent Letter to my friend, Major Cartwright, which I received ſome time ago, and for which I very ſincerely thank you. Your reaſoning is approved by all to whom I have given your book; one of which I gave to my eldeſt ſon, one I keep myſelf, and the reſt I have diſtributed; ſome among the zealous, and ſome among the more moderate Advocates for Reform; and one I have given to a firm, but temperate ſupporter of the preſent order of things.

his conduct in Parliament. But in an age like the preſent, when corruption is grown audacious, when ſhameful and long-practiced violations of law, and malverſations in office have been detected, and confeſſed by the offenders themſelves, and when their guilt has been declared by 216 Members of the Houſe of Commons, yet other 216 Members have been found to reſiſt the virtuous declaration, and it was carried only by the caſting vote of their Speaker; in an age thus degenerate, it may be uſeful to exhibit the habitual ſentiments of men unſtained by the pollutions of corrupt Politicians, to contraſt their virtues with the guilt of the Peculator and his Friend; their happy conſciouſneſs of integrity, their dignity of character with the ſelf-accuſing mind of a Melville, or of the man who ſcreens him from that puniſhment which juſtice would inflict upon him. And let the Reader now conſider whether it would not be well for the Community, if the principles of this letter were more frequently adopted by Public Men; and whether their more frequent adoption can be expected, till the Abuſes by which Parliament is diſhonoured have been removed by a temperate, but effectual Reform.

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I live ſo much out of the world, that I have not yet ſeen the Major's publication; nor, indeed, had I heard of it until I read your anſwer, from which only I am able to judge of the nature of his arguments.

Of our friend's incorruptible integrity, of his honeſt zeal, of his manly fortitude, and of his diſintereſted and unwearied perſeverance in the Cauſe of Freedom, you and I have but one opinion. And here let me add my poor tribute of thanks to you, for your unceaſing endeavours to promote the welfare and happineſs not only of your Country, but of mankind. That your labours have not hitherto been attended with more beneficial effects, is a circumſtance moſt deeply to be lamented; but it was a maxim of that truly honeſt man, the late Doctor John Jebb, and I am perſuaded a true one, that no good effort is ever loſt. Beſides, "deſponding is the vice of an ignoble mind." The chief cauſe of all our preſent evils is ignorance; and till there is more knowledge, and conſequently more virtue, no Reform by any rational man can be expected, that will either be efficient or permanent.

If at preſent there is not a total want of Public Virtue, there is an apathy, or what you have ſo well deſcribed in your Letter, page 18, which is equally favourable to the views of thoſe who profit by ſupporting the preſent ſyſtem of fraud, of force, and corruption. No ſtate of Society can long exiſt, nor ought it, where Property is not fully ſecured; but, at this juncture, Liberty and Life appear

pear to be but ſecondary conſiderations; and both are frequently, wantonly, and unneceſſarily ſacrificed to its protection.

There are many men who cannot, or rather, perhaps, who will not make this very neceſſary and obvious diſtinction, that, not only in Reforms, but even in Revolutions, evil does not ariſe from the purſuit of good, but from the oppoſition which is made to it.

This Country has been brought into its preſent miſerable and degraded ſituation *not* by the known Advocates of Deſpotiſm, for they could not have done it; but by the timid, the pretended, the perfidious, and the apoſtate Friends of Freedom.

In my opinion no character can be more juſt than the one which you have ſo ably drawn of Mr. Fox. Did Bonaparte poſſeſs a mind like his, how would the ſtock of human happineſs be increaſed! That it very ſoon may be, is the fervent prayer of,

Dear Sir,
Your very faithful,
And much obliged ſervant,
THOMAS WALKER.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* THOMAS WALKER, Esq.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 25th*, 1802.

Dear Sir,

I OWE you many thanks for your obliging letter of the 16th inſtant, and the trouble you took in diſtributing my anſwer to Major Cartwright. It is a great encouragement to me to know that the reaſoning of my Letter to Major Cartwright is approved by you, and by the Friends of Freedom in Manchester and its neighbourhood; for, convinced I am, that Liberty cannot be ſucceſsfully defended, by peaceful means, on principles which are, and which are generally thought to be dangerous to Property: and if ſucceſs is not to be expected to attend any *legal efforts* on this ground, it muſt be for reaſons which ought to forbid the moſt diſtant tendency to a forcible Revolution; for reaſons which would render ſuch unwarrantable meaſures either unſucceſsful, or abſolutely pernicious to the Community, if they were carried by force, as the miſery of France, after the ſecond Revolution which dethroned the King, ſeems clearly to ſhow. What can be obtained by legal efforts may be entire and unmixed advantage to the Community; what cannot be obtained without throwing the Country into a ſtate of convulſion, may too probably coſt more than it is worth. But I am gratified not only by your approbation

approbation of my writings, but much more by the eſteem you kindly expreſs of my general conduct as a Public Man. I conſider you as a man whoſe attachment to the Cauſe of Liberty and Human Happineſs has been tried by the ſevereſt and unmerited proſecutions; who ſuſtained and defeated the attacks of oppreſſive Power in the worſt of times; who ſacrificed much, and riſqued more by his faithful adherence to the principles of Conſtitutional Liberty; and I value the approbation of ſuch a man as the Suffrage of a Martyr for Liberty.

With reſpect to myſelf, it has been my good fortune to eſcape proſecution; for though conſcious of innocence, there was a time when I ſaw much reaſon to apprehend it. I ſaw the danger without perturbation, and reſolved to meet it. Fortunately the fury of the times is much abated; and perſecution will probably, *for the preſent*, forbear to ſeize and ſacrifice any freſh victims to the luſt of Power. Age, however, muſt now oblige me to retire from any active ſcene of oppoſition, in which younger men may, and I hope ſoon will engage. It is time for me to cloſe my account with the Public, by printing the reſidue of my Political Papers, in which taſk I have already made a conſiderable progreſs. And I flatter myſelf thoſe Papers, conſiſting chiefly of Correſpondence with many of the principal Friends of Liberty for 20 years, will vindicate the legality of their conduct, and their attachment to the genuine principles of the Conſtitution; and at the ſame time

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tend to warn younger men, who may renew the attempt to preſerve the Conſtitution by a timely Reform, to unite with their zeal and activity a conſtant adherence to pacific and moderate meaſures.

I heartily wiſh you, Sir, long to enjoy that peace of mind and general eſteem of which your enemies in vain endeavoured to deprive you*. I am,

With great regard,
Your much obliged
and faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

* The Editor has been authorized by Mr. Walker to declare on his behalf, "That the only Political Societies of which he ever was a Member were the Manchester Conſtitutional Society, the London Conſtitutional Society, and the Whig Club: And it is his parting complaint to the Public, "That he has been not more the victim of war and corruption than of miſconception and miſrepreſentation; for calumny, he has found, is a moſt powerful engine in the hands of the oppreſſor."

NUMBER XXIV.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with* J. CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *in the year* 1800, *&c.*

LETTER I.

From JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

KELHAM HOUSE, 31*ſt Dec.* 1800.

Dear Sir,

I WAS the other day in the neighbourhood of a great town, where I have reaſon to believe an energetic Petition will ſhortly be ſigned for the Removal of Miniſters, and for a Reform in the Houſe of Commons, which the Petition ſtates to be that without which it is in vain to look for relief from the public diſtreſs, &c. &c.

Coming through Doncaſter, I heard that Mr. Wrightſon began to think it time for reſorting once more to a County Meeting. I have no doubt of your thinking it high time alſo; and I hope you may have diſcovered ſymptoms of ſuch a change in the Public Mind as to warrant the meaſure in point of policy. I hope the Petition above mentioned may contribute to accelerate that change of Public Opinion of which I ſee every where evident marks. The Petition alluded to, perhaps will not be thought a good model for Counties, as the terms of it imply that acquaintance with

with the true cauſes of the Nation's calamity, which, in the preſent ſtate of things, can only be expected to ſhow itſelf in thoſe hives of men where political ſubjects are conſtantly diſcuſſed; but it may ſo far deſerve attention and imitation, as it utterly rejects every idea of truſting to mere palliatives or temporizing meaſures. If the ſtrength of the Counties could now be called forth, we ſhould have nothing ſo much to deprecate as half meaſures, ſuch as confining the prayer of the People to the mere Removal of Miniſters, or to an earneſt endeavour for Peace. As the enemies of Liberty muſt perfectly underſtand what we mean by any, and by every meaſure, they will, from the firſt, conduct all their operations ſo as moſt effectually to guard themſelves againſt our ultimate meaſure of a Reform; whereas the ſadly uninſtructed multitude, on whom our ſucceſs depends, ſtand in need of being, from the firſt, enlightened on the radical cauſe of their ſufferings; and unleſs we, from the firſt, lay the great ſtreſs upon Reform, in my judgment we ſhall experience the ſame iſſue as awaited our efforts towards the end of the American War, when we were perſuaded, always againſt my judgment, to waſte our efforts in complaining of Places, Penſions, Miniſters, and the unœconomical Expenditure of Public Money. It has ever appeared to me that all our Petitions ſhould be in themſelves leſſons of inſtruction, as to the grand evil of the State. This ſhould be our conſtant text; all elſe mere illuſtrations of this text. Taking this ground, and

never loſing ſight of it ourſelves, nor ſuffering the People to be drawn aſide from the view and contemplation of it by any other excluſive object whatever, we ſhall always be fearleſs of defeat; for, from every defeat we ſhall be likely to riſe again with new ſtrength. But to you, my dear Sir, ſo experienced in the warfare of Reform, I need not purſue the ſubject.

If you can raiſe a County Meeting, and, in addition to Freeholders, will invite Copy and *Leaſeholders*, I ſhould be included in the invitation, as I hold in Yorkſhire a Church Leaſe, the certain annual rent of which is 80l. and the contingent rent may be twice or thrice as much. On ſuch an occaſion, if it were within the compaſs of practicability, I would attend your Meeting. From my own experience, I can eaſily imagine that on ſuch occaſions your greateſt difficulty is at your Previous Meetings, to put in a right train thoſe Country Gentlemen whoſe minds are extremely uninſtructed on the ſubject of Political Reform, and who yet are apt to be very tenacious of their own opinions. It is here, as I conceive, that I might aſſiſt you with ſome effect, and help to ſmooth your way to the adoption of meaſures worthy of your wiſdom.

Gigantic as is that corruption we have to combat, our difficulties do not appear inſurmountable, provided only a very reaſonable number of men of proper ſize, and in ſuitable ſituations, would but act with union, conſiſtency, energy, and a ſteady perſeverance in a ſtraight courſe towards our proper object. Half a dozen in each Houſe of Parliament,

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and half a dozen in an average for each County in the Country might, as I conceive, lay the foundations of the work, and gradually increaſe their numbers until their ſtrength ſhould be crowned with ſucceſs. All our paſt miſcarriages for the laſt twenty years, would be invaluable experience, and, if rightly improved, would enable the maſter workmen to direct the maſs. And the moſt inſtructive part of our experience is not to neglect the criſis moſt favourable to Reform, *that* when the Public keenly feels calamity. You ſee how the arch Apoſtate and Impoſtor is guarding againſt any attempt of the Reformers, to avail themſelves of ſo favourable a moment, by inſinuations about inflaming the Public Mind, &c. &c. He well knows their ſeaſon for acting with effect, and they ought not to ſuffer him either to juggle, or to bully them out of it.

I have ſome reaſon to imagine that the Petition I at firſt ſpoke of, is likely to be tranſmitted by the Petitioners to their Correſpondents in ſeveral other populous places, in each of which I ſhould hope it may be adopted either in whole, or in part, and that at all events its moſt vital parts would be thoſe ſelected for adoption. Should a great movement of this kind take place in the populous towns, it muſt greatly ſtimulate the Counties, and, on ſuch appearances, we might take for granted Mr. Fox would be drawn from his retirement.

As I ſhall be anxious to know your ſentiments, and, above all, that while men have

reaſon, and Divine Providence have exiſtence, you are incapable of deſpairing, I ſhall be greatly obliged to you for a line *. Believe me,

Dear Sir,

Very ſincerely your's

J. CARTWRIGHT.

* The deſire to improve his condition is a principle planted by nature in the breaſt of man; and human reaſon, at the ſuggeſtion of this deſire, is conſtantly ſearching for the means of higher felicity. By this principle continually operating on the mind of innumerable tribes of men, for many ages, a great melioration in their ſtate has been effected. This is evident, from the hiſtorical accounts of mankind, in paſt ages, compared with their actual condition at preſent: It is evident, whether we conſider the comforts and ſecurity enjoyed in civilized Society, contraſted with the inſecurity and many wants of man living in a ſtate of ſavage independence; or whether we compare the ſuperior knowledge and mental dignity to which he has been gradually raiſed in well-regulated Communities, with that low and ſemi-brutal condition in which he has always been found in the early ſtages, even of ſocial life.

It is true that the far greater part of mankind have ſtill the misfortune to live under Governments which are ill calculated to promote the General Happineſs; in many wide and well-peopled Regions the paternal rule of a limited Government is unknown, and the uncontroulable will of a Deſpot at once oppreſſes and intimidates the Nation.

In the Monarchies of Aſia, the unhappy people have been ſo long ſubjected to oppreſſive Rulers, that the hope, and with it, the deſire of bettering their condition, ſeem nearly extinct; and unleſs external events ſhould rouze the latent principle of improvement in thoſe Communities, the oppreſſions of their arbitrary Governments are but too likely to continue unredreſſed. And yet, when we conſider the Governments which have been eſtabliſhed in various Countries, and in different ages of the world, and compare their reſpective effects on the happineſs of man, we find no reaſon to form an unfavourable opinion of the general tendency to improvement in the frame and rules of Civil Inſtitutions. In ſome Countries, we know that human reaſon has been able to regulate the forms of Government on juſt principles of Liberty; and the happineſs of the Community appears to be better ſecured in thoſe Countries than it was even in ancient Greece and Italy. And though reaſon has failed to introduce or preſerve thoſe principles in other leſs fortunate and leſs cultivated Communities in the Continental Monarchies of Europe, &c; yet, at leaſt it has been able, even there, to mitigate the evils of deſpotic power; and there it muſt be owned Society is ſtill advancing to greater felicity, though with a pace leſs firm and

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LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Esq.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 9th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

YOU have rightly judged of my opinions at this criſis. I certainly think it high time that the Counties ſhould aſſemble; and for that purpoſe, in Yorkſhire I have been correſponding with our principal friends for the

rapid than in Countries in which Political Freedom has been eſtabliſhed. Yet, though mankind, even in reſpect of their political inſtitutions, appear to be in a ſtate of progreſſive improvement, ſtill in particular Communities their Governments are liable to fluctuation; ſometimes advancing and extending their capacity to promote the general weal; ſometimes taking a retrograde direction, and becoming leſs fit to produce the benefits for which they were eſtabliſhed. Even Nations diſtinguiſhed by the Arts and Sciences, by learning and philoſophy, which have long enjoyed the bleſſings of Freedom under Governments conſtructed on the beſt and moſt equitable principles, may be degraded by various concurring cauſes to a condition of political ſlavery: the Aſſembly of their States may be laid aſide, and unlimited power may be ſeized by their ambitious Princes. Such a reverſe we ought to conſider may be the fate of Britain, though we boaſt a Conſtitution which was originally framed on the principles of Liberty, and which appears fitted to be permanent, becauſe it contains within itſelf the means of improvement. But time has introduced great Abuſes in the ſtate of our Popular Repreſentation; Corruption, availing itſelf of theſe Abuſes, has vitiated our Houſe of Commons; and our Territorial Aggrandizement has thrown into the ſcale of the Crown a weight of undue influence, to withſtand which with ſufficient efficacy, would require the vigour and integrity of a Parliament radically reformed. To effect ſuch a radical Reform has been the object for which the true Friends of their Country have been contending during a great part of this long reign, but hitherto without ſucceſs. The baleful influence of Corruption has continually increaſed, and the balance of our Conſtitution is more than ever deranged. And yet the People can bear to look on with apathy, as if they were unconcerned in the ſtruggle, and as if impending ruin did not threaten to deſtroy the beautiful ſyſtem of well-regulated Freedom, to which England owes her happineſs.

Undoubtedly

the laſt three months: I hope not altogether in vain. There is ſtill a degree of caution which will not permit us to call a Previous Meeting; but I expect that the momentous events which a few weeks have produced, and a few more are likely to produce, will remove all heſitation, and bring Yorkſhire forward. We cannot, however, begin with the ſubject of Reform. The impracticability of carrying any queſtion of that deſcription is but too evident. Shall we then abſtain from our intended Meetings on this account? Would you think

Undoubtedly there is little to cheer us in this view of our Country and its Conſtitution; yet let not the penſive Philanthropiſt deſpond too far, and relax his patriotic exertions. External events have brought on our danger; and external events may contribute to remove it: they may aſſiſt his efforts to defend the Conſtitution, and by their aid the dreaded extinction of our Liberty finally may be prevented. The national reaſon may well be expected to decide the great controverſy as it ought, when panic fears have been overcome by the increaſed caution of the Friends of Reformation; when the alarming extent of Corruption in all its baſeneſs and in all its audacity has been ſtill more completely exhibited to its view, and when the peremptory alternative has been preſented to its choice, that this baſeneſs and audacity muſt be endured, that all their fatal conſequences muſt be ſubmitted to, or a temperate, but effectual correction of Abuſes muſt be accompliſhed. But it were needleſs and unſeaſonable to addreſs ſuch thoughts to the Chriſtian Patriot. Under the gloomieſt circumſtances of the Community he needs no exhortations to animate him to perſeverance, no conſolatory conſiderations to ſhield him from deſpair. The events of this life, whether they concern Individuals, or affect Nations, he knows are all directed by the providence of a Being perfectly wiſe and perfectly benevolent. And in the ſtruggle againſt impudent corruption, ſupported by fraud and power, though immediate ſucceſs may ſurpaſs his expectation, he reſts aſſured that the final iſſue of it will be favourable to the United Cauſe of Integrity and Freedom. To himſelf it is allotted to do his duty, and to endeavour, to the utmoſt of his power, to promote the welfare of his fellow creatures, without too anxious an inquiry after the probable reſult of his exertions. It is enough for his encouragement to know that not one virtuous effort is ever wholly fruitleſs, and not one benevolent endeavour, however feeble, of any individual, however humble, will paſs unnoticed by God's all-ſeeing eye, or unrewarded by his goodneſs.

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abſolute inactivity in Yorkſhire would better ſerve the Cauſe of Conſtitutional Liberty than an attempt to remove Miniſters by our Petition? I conceive your anſwer would not be an affirmative. We muſt aſſiſt that Cauſe in the way, and by the means by which it can be aſſiſted. I mean by legal means, undoubtedly. If not, we loſe opportunities of doing ſome good, becauſe we have not the means of doing all the good we could wiſh. This, my dear Sir, is the clue to my political conduct for the laſt twenty years; and on mature conſideration, I am perſuaded that yourſelf would not adviſe me to drop it on the preſent occaſion, and take up another.

Conceiving, therefore, that you muſt wiſh ſucceſs to the endeavours now employed to rouze Yorkſhire to a General Meeting, and that you muſt be heartily diſpoſed to prevent any meaſures elſewhere, at leaſt for a time that would not be greatly inconvenient, by which our propoſed movement in Yorkſhire would probably be defeated, you will, I hope, allow me to repreſent my fear, that ſuch may be the effect of the Petitions preparing in the towns alluded to in your letter, and to requeſt that you will interpoſe, with all earneſtneſs, to obtain a delay of thoſe meaſures, till after our intended Meeting at York has been held, or it has become evident that we are not ſtrong enough, and muſt give that meaſure up.

I think the buſineſs will be aſcertained in two or three weeks, either for a Meeting immediately, or againſt it for this winter. And as ſoon as the Yorkſhire Gentlemen have come

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to a determinarion, I will communicate it to you without delay. If the towns alluded to can be induced by your friendly aſſiſtance to forbear bringing forward their Petitions till Yorkſhire and the other Counties have held their Meetings, it will, I conceive, be an eſſential ſervice to the Common Cauſe. I am,

Dear Sir,

With great regard,

Very truly your's,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From J. CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

MIRFIELD-HALL, 14*th Jan.* 1801.

Dear Sir,

ON returning yeſterday to this place I met your letter of the 9th, and immediately wrote to requeſt, if poſſible, a temporary ſuſpenſion of the Petitions alluded to in my laſt; but at all events, if too late for an actual ſuſpenſion, the precaution of as much ſecrecy as might be in collecting ſignatures; as well as to ſecure their not being made public or preſented until ample time ſhould be allowed for learning the effect of the efforts of yourſelf and the other Friends of Freedom in Yorkſhire.

Moſt exceedingly do I lament the neceſſity you ſtate yourſelf to be under, of reſtraining yourſelf from ſpeaking of Reform, while attempting to bring forward your County in the preſent awful criſis. Such a ſtatement implies

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ſo much want of information amongſt the Country Gentlemen as cannot be ſufficiently deplored, and as muſt deeply afflict him who ſo many years ago was at the head of the Yorkſhire Patriots in ſeeking that Reform which can alone redreſs the Grievances of the Nation

After ſo many anxious years of increaſing corruption, to have to begin again with moving ſuch a County as Yorkſhire, for a mere Removal of Miniſters, is grievous in the extreme! It is fortunate, however, in the higheſt degree, that if the Country Gentlemen have profited ſo little from the experience of the laſt twenty years, the Inhabitants of the large towns are in various places well prepared to ſhow their knowledge of the Conſtitution, its grand diſeaſe, and only remedy. And if thoſe towns ſhall petition in ſuch terms as I truſt they will, the Country Gentlemen will ſee they have nothing to fear from their movements. In a Petition that I have ſeen, care has been taken not to alarm the moſt timid, except for the conſequences of the ſyſtem on which the preſent Miniſters act. That Petition has not only been intended to expreſs the wiſhes of the Petitioners, but to inſtruct their Countrymen in the true Cauſes of the Public Calamity, and in the proper courſe to be purſued by the People in general for obtaining redreſs *. In the moving

* The phyſical ſtrength of the Reformers lay chiefly in the Town-Aſſociations. They were more numerous, and more zealous, and more perſevering than the Friends of Reform in the Counties; but they were too apt to hurt the Cauſe they were devoted to, by adopting meaſures which alarmed and diſguſted the Freeholders, without whoſe concurrence it were in vain to expect ſucceſs,

ing of large Counties, and of ſmaller Communities, a different line of conduct ſeems to be required. In the latter, the political knowledge once acquired is retained, and ſuch Communities are ſoon prepared rationally to act upon that knowledge; whereas the Inhabitants of Counties, for want of ſufficient intercourſe, do not long retain ſuch knowledge, and the neceſſary political impreſſions for renewing patriotic operations, at the point where they formerly ceaſed. Theſe conſiderations, I truſt, will diſpoſe you to look with the beſt hopes to the expected movement of the towns; as, indeed, thoſe alone which can give the County movements any beneficial effect.

Looking back to the origin of Petitions in the American War, and reviewing at the ſame time the extended fortifications of corruption ſince that period, what could we expect from very numerous County Petitions for a mere

ſucceſs, at leaſt by pacific and conſtitutional means. Yet if the zeal of the Town-Aſſociations ſometimes carried them too far, the caution of the Freeholders not leſs frequently kept them back in timorous inactivity, when their aſſiſtance might have been prudently given; and when, by their ſeaſonable co-operation, they might have effected that moderate Reform of the Conſtitution which would have placed the Liberty of the Nation beyond the reach of danger. From the languor on one hand, and the impetuoſity on the other, aroſe the dilemma which perplexed the Counſels of the Reformers, and prevented their acting with that unanimity by which alone they could ſucceed.

On any freſh emergency diſpoſing the Nation to ſupport propoſals of Reform, the ſame difficulty, probably, will occur again; and to obviate it, will be the grand requiſite on which our all will depend. The ſame counſel will again be the ſuggeſtion of common ſenſe, and again the neceſſary policy of the Town-Reformers will be to follow, rather than to attempt to lead the Counties. If confiding in their Numbers, they will again march too faſt, and advance before the leſs active and ſpirited Reformers of the Counties, their ſeparation will be certain, and the ruin of their cauſe will be unavoidable.

Removal

Removal of Miniſters? Nothing, as I conceive, but a juggling change of men, without a change of meaſures and principles, or a ſhadow of ſecurity in future. I agree with you, my Dear Sir, nevertheleſs, that we ought to be circumſpect in not defeating our own views, by attempting too much at a time, or in the wrong place; and, therefore, while you find yourſelf under the neceſſity of accommodating yourſelf to the ſhort views and erroneous policy of the Yorkſhire Gentlemen, that ſhould not reſtrain others from propoſing in the populous towns ſuch meaſures of greater energy as they are prepared to adopt. Beſides, I will own to you, that I never had much fear of being defeated in meaſures intrinſically right, and ſuch as, the more they are conſidered, the more they approve themſelves to the rational mind; for I incline to think that we riſe again ſtronger from ſuch defeats, than even from victories, when our conteſts are for trifles. A crafty Court will often gain its ends by allowing us ſuch victories; but it dreads nothing ſo much as to ſee the People enlightened on the political principles on which Freedom depends.

Hoping my applications will be in time to prevent the inconvenience you feared *, and moſt ſincerely wiſhing you ſucceſs in what you are attempting, I remain,

Dear Sir,

With the greateſt eſteem,

Your's very ſincerely,

JOHN CARTWRIGHT.

* The applications were ſucceſsful, and the towns alluded to ſuſpended their Petitions.

LETTER IV.

From J. CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

No. 28, *Arundel Street, Strand,*
LONDON, 9*th Feb.* 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE letter with which you laſt favoured me is ſufficiently diſcouraging; but it warms my heart to ſee your ſteady perſeverance in the cauſe of Freedom; and I truſt that among your Yorkſhire Gentlemen there will yet be found ſpirit and wiſdom to ſet a worthy example to others. Could they think of any thing ſo degrading as a Petition for mere Peace? Far better would it be, that they retired every man to his own home, than that they ſhould do their Country ſo much miſchief. Peace I moſt earneſtly deſire, but not Peace and Chains. And what elſe but chains can be our lot—and deſerved chains, if the preſent ſyſtem of Government is not to be reſiſted?

Can Engliſh Gentlemen be ſilent when they reflect, that at the period when the Stewarts were expelled from the Throne, and a ſettlement of the Crown was made upon his preſent Majeſty's family, the Nation owed ſcarcely half a million; that, corrupt as the Government was, it took one hundred and four years, ending with 1792, to run in debt two hundred and fifty millions; and that in eight years of Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration that enormous debt has been more than doubled?

Can

Can Engliſh Gentlemen want an explanation of ſuch Government, when they know, or ought to know, that more than three parts in four of thoſe who vote the Public Money are no more the Repreſentatives of England than they are of Egypt?

Surely, Sir, the Gentlemen of Yorkſhire muſt ſee the ſituation in which they ſtand, and muſt ſee that neither Peace, nor a Change of Miniſters, can avert the Nation's fate, unleſs accompanied with a ſecurity in future againſt bad Miniſters and unneceſſary Wars.

Many of thoſe Gentlemen muſt know the almoſt total alienation of mind of the labouring claſſes from the Conſtitution, and I fear that it is not confined to the labouring claſſes. The cauſes are plain enough. Oppreſſion and miſery never made friends to any Government. It is for the Gentlemen and the Nobility to cure this diſguſt, by ſtanding forward like men, and never ſlackening their efforts until they ſee their Country reſtored to real Freedom. The trumpery of planting potatoes, and the quackery of importing wheat, may amuſe old women, but there is no ſecret for making a Government fit to live under, but Liberty. It is only under a fair Repreſentation a People can have fair play. All other modes of redreſſing grievances are cheats and inſults.

If the Repreſentation of this Country be what I have ſaid, it is a demonſtration that our Conſtitution is ſubverted. Should it be the buſineſs of Engliſh Gentlemen to ſhut their eyes to this monſtrous abuſe, and to hoodwink the Country, or to proclaim it aloud, and to diſ-

ſeminate the truth, till no man could be ignonorant of the fact, or of the conſequences?

If the fact be as I ſay, we have taxation without repreſentation. And is it not ſelf evident, that a taxation without repreſentation places at the arbitrary diſpoſal of the Crown every man's whole eſtate, real and perſonal, ſinking the rightful proprietor and maſter into a mere agent for the Exchequer over his own property, which muſt be delivered up to the Miniſter on demand, whether as ſhip-money, or ſoldier-money; or for whatever purpoſe, or in whatever ſhape or proportion that almighty Miniſter pleaſes?

Is not taxation without repreſentation, be the authorities for carrying it into execution what they may, a demonſtration of exiſting deſpotiſm and exiſting ſlavery? And are not theſe again the worſt of all "exiſting circumſtances?" And if any Yorkſhire Gentlemen have ſagacity enough to diſcover a difference between a ſyſtem of taxation without repreſentation, and Mr. Pitt's "ſolid ſyſtem of finance," I ſhould be much gratified by the information.

It is impoſſible but the Gentlemen of England in general muſt now be faſt opening their eyes to the groſs impoſition put upon them by an Impoſtor whom I have elſewhere called the Judas of the Conſtitution, and the deſtroying Angel of his Country. They are, as I ſhould think, growing ſufficiently ſober to ſee, as a palpable truth, that at the time when that Miniſter, with a debt of *two hundred and forty ſeven millions*, hanging like a mill-ſtone at the neck

neck of his Country, made War upon France, that Country was already beſet by ſo many enemies, and in ſuch a ſtate of diſtraction, weakneſs, and danger, ſhe could not but anxiouſly wiſh for Peace with Great-Britain.

Hence it muſt alſo be ſelf-evident, that in the whole Hiſtory of the two Nations, there never was a period ſo favourable to this Country for ſecuring the permanency of Peace with France, and for ſtrengthening, by a generous policy, in the ſpirit of her own free Government, the bonds of union and friendſhip then happily ſubſiſting between the two Nations, the very period in which Miniſters choſe to rend aſunder that ſubſiſting friendſhip, and, to the indelible diſhonour of our Country, to join in the War againſt French Freedom, in conjunction with all the Deſpots of Europe.

Can we want better evidence that the War, in fact, ſo far as we are to regard the motives of Miniſters, was a War againſt Engliſh Liberty? And does not the evidence accumulate upon us when we look back to their frauds and deceptions; to their perſecutions of all active Patriots; to their attempt in 1794 at legal murder; to the doctrines they have proſcribed, and the doctrines they have diſſeminated; and, in ſhort, to their whole ſyſtem?

Every thing they have done, from firſt to laſt, has been to defeat the endeavours of the Parliamentary Reformers; and the uſe they have in the ſtruggle made of their ſyſtem of taxation without repreſentation, and the dreadful calamities they have brought upon the Country, by the uſe they have made of that engine of deſpotiſm, ought to ſatisfy the Na-

tion of the wiſdom and virtue of thoſe who laboured to arouze their Countrymen in that great Cauſe, and to wreſt from their hands that dreadful engine.

I very much hope that you mean to be in London this Spring, as ſoon as the buſineſs of your County Meeting will permit; but I fear that cannot be before I ſhall leave Town. I have heard of ſymptoms of a right feeling in ſome perſons of high rank, and ideas are afloat for a line of conduct which it is hoped ſuch men may take for placing themſelves as a barrier between their Country and its Deſtroyers. If any thing ſo dignified and ſo virtuous as I have heard rumoured ſhould be ſet on foot, it has occurred to me that you might be ſingularly uſeful in promoting it.

Great as may appear to be the enterprize of encountering a faction in poſſeſſion of Deſpotic Power, and having at its diſpoſal an almoſt countleſs revenue, your's is not a mind incapable of the conception. A ſyſtem againſt which reaſon revolts, and which is abhorrent to every feeling of the human ſoul, may be the neareſt its fall, when to thoſe who underſtand not moral cauſes, it may appear reſiſtleſs.

In one part of this Capital we may entertain good hopes from a few good heads and Engliſh hearts. Great expectations have been entertained from Yorkſhire virtue. Should your counſel prevail, we ſhall not be diſappointed. Anxiouſly wiſhing you ſucceſs,

I am truly your's,

JOHN CARTWRIGHT.

P. S. In the ſtate of the King's health, it is probable that no Gentlemen will now think of a Peti-

a Petition to the Throne. There cannot be a view of ſuch a meaſure in which it muſt not appear eitheir highly improper, or completely nugatory. You will of courſe think of the Houſe of Commons. Independent of all the peculiar circumſtances of the moment, that is infinitely to be preferred. If any virtue remain in that Houſe, and I truſt there is ſome, Petitions may produce diſcuſſion; and as news-paper political reading is all that is left the People for the preſent, that is infinitely the beſt way of communicating political information. A Petition to the Throne, at this juncture, at the beſt could expect no better fate than to ſink into the pocket of a Bed-Chamber Lord, or perhaps of a Page, and conſequently muſt remain unknown to the Public; whereas, if made the ſubject of debate in Parliament, its right effect may be produced;—that of animating other bodies of men to follow the example. But here, my dear Sir, I muſt expreſs a ſentiment that is never abſent from my mind when conſidering of Petitions from the People to any branch of the Legiſlature, eſpecially at a criſis like the preſent. I am ſure you will agree with me; but I fear there are thoſe who have not ſo long, nor ſo much thought on theſe ſubjects, who may not at firſt ſee the importance of proceeding in a right way. With ſuch Gentlemen, I hope your arguments will have their due weight. I merely offer mine in corroboration of what you would ſay on the ſubject. We know that Petitions for redreſs of National Grievances do not uſually appear until thoſe Grievances are of great magnitude, and big with

danger and miſery. We know that a Government which has produced the Grievances will diſregard Petitions until they become general, or from their nature it is ſeen they muſt ſoon become general. On thoſe, therefore, who take a lead, a great reſponſibility reſts; and it becomes them to act with that knowledge of the public ſituation, that wiſdom in the application for redreſs, and with that dignity of demeanour, which ſhall at once inſtruct other bodies in the conduct to be purſued, and inſpire them with a warm deſire of imitation. Who then, that knows any thing of our ſituation, can be ignorant that neither the War nor the Miniſtry, grievous as they are in the light of evils, is the particular Grievance on which we ought to lay the greateſt ſtreſs, and to make the burthen of all Petitions? I am ſure I do not think the curſe of War now afflicting us of light account; neither do I think the curſe of a Miniſtry, which for its own corrupt purpoſes involved us in the War, a curſe of ordinary weight and malignance; but ſtill when a War and a Miniſtry are merely ſymptomatic, the mere conſequences of a yet more deadly diſeaſe, I cannot think of any preſcriptions for abating the virulence of the ſymptoms, without directing the main attention to the removal of the original diſeaſe. For Heaven's ſake, my dear Sir, warn your leſs-experienced friends of the ſad conſequences of a wrong example coming from Yorkſhire.

It were greatly to be wiſhed, the Nobility and Gentry could form a right eſtimate of what

what *they* now, in an eſpecial manner, owe to their Country. It is they, who, having become the dupes of a fraudful alarm, enabled Miniſters to carry on the War, and to reign in oppreſſion and terror. It is *their* ſupport of thoſe Miniſters in the perſecution of Freedom, till the very word *Liberty* has been a ſort of ſedition, and until the lower ranks in ſociety, once Friends to Parliamentary Reform, are in a great degree utterly alienated from the Conſtitution, that has done their Country more miſchief than can be calculated. Theſe perſons ſhould now ſeriouſly conſider.

Interruption cuts me ſhort. I intended to have ſhown that, unleſs the Nobility and Gentry will ſtand forward to reſtore the Liberty of their Country, themſelves, and all our inſtitutions, from both within and without will be in the utmoſt danger. J. C.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *April 10th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

AFTER Mr. Addington's declaration, that he would negociate for Peace with France, I think you would not expect that our cautious friends in Yorkſhire would proceed. In fact, I was ſo ſenſible of the neceſſity for a pauſe that the reſult of the Negociation might be known, that I did myſelf propoſe it; and all our friends approved it. How long we may wait before the French Government will

have

have given a negative to our propoſals, it is impoſſible to gueſs; but not difficult, I think, to foreſee that a negative will be the anſwer, unleſs Mr. Addington ſhould lower his lofty tone on the ſubject of the Northern Claims. If the War ſhould continue, we ſhall meet in great ſtrength, but we ſhall meet too late, I fear, to prevent the ruin of our Country. I grow more and more inclined to join thoſe who totally deſpair that any exertions on the part of the Gentry will be made with effect to prevent the moſt fatal extremes. They wiſh for Peace; but their dread of plunder and outrage from the mob is ſo great, that they conſider every Meeting, even of the Freeholders, to be attended with danger, as holding out encouragement to the lower claſſes, and likely to end in diſturbance. The ſupport of Government in all its meaſures appears to them the only ſecurity againſt a Revolution; and the Friends of Conſtitutional Liberty, however cautious, however moderate in their conduct, cannot obtain their confidence.

Thus circumſtanced, we cannot do much for the Public. We muſt wait till events produce a change of mind; and we muſt reſolve to do our duty as far as circumſtances will permit, let the proſpect of ſucceſs be as diſcouraging as it may be.

I ſay this to a Patriot, who I am ſure has often ſaid it to himſelf, as his conduct has ſufficiently ſhown. I am,

With great regard,

Dear Sir,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER VI.

From J. CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONDON, 13*th April*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

SOME time ſince I devoted my leiſure to the penning of a letter to you, which ſhould fully explain what I had alluded to when I wiſhed for your preſence in London. The ſubject growing upon me as I proceeded, and conſiderations of the deepeſt importance preſenting themſelves to my mind, my letter at length filled many ſheets; and I felt a ſtrong impreſſion of the neceſſity of communicating its intents to others without delay, as I could not expect your early arrival in Town. For theſe reaſons I have printed ſome copies for private diſtribution; but, for the preſent, on grounds that will be obvious on the peruſal of the printed letter, that diſtribution is confined within a very narrow circle, taking in only yourſelf, the Dukes of Grafton, Bedford, and Northumberland, and Lord Stanhope. In my letters however to theſe perſons I am obliged to ſay, " in conſequence, however, of correſpon-
" dence carried on while the writer was medi-
" tating on his ſubject with a few friends in diſ-
" tant and agitated parts of the Kingdom, in
" which correſpondence he delivered his ſenti-
" ments on what, in his judgment, ought to be
" done, and might be expected to be done, he,
" the writer, inſenſibly ſo ſpoke of what was
" in his mind, and ſo far engaged himſelf to

" communicate the reſult, that he has found " himſelf bound to tranſmit copies of his print- " ed letter to theſe few friends

" He ſimply ſtates to theſe friends that, for " the preſent, a few only amongſt the great " are to ſee the letter, in hopes they will con- " verſe on the ſubject with a wider circle, and " requeſts them not to put the printed letter " out of their own hands, nor to make of it " any other preſent uſe than merely, if they " ſee it likely to produce beneficial conſe- " quences, to offer it as their opinion, founded " on correſpondence, that if the People ſhall " look only to a conſtitutional redreſs of Griev- " ances, and will properly exert themſelves " for that political object which, indeed, is all " the reſt, there is reaſon to hope they will " not want friends amongſt the great; but " care has been, and will be taken not to " name any of the perſons of rank who have " been addreſſed on the preſent occaſion."

I underſtand that all your County proceed- ings are now ſuſpended till you ſee the iſſue of the preſent Negociations. In the extreme mortification which you, who know ſo well the abſolute neceſſity of Reform, muſt feel at the aſtoniſhing prejudices and apathy of the Country Gentlemen, I ſympathize moſt truly, but could not bear it with ſo much patience as you do. Indeed it is queſtionable with me whether in twelve months time the Gentle- men of England, who ſhew ſuch an inſenſibility to the Cauſe of Liberty, and who are abſorbed merely in the intereſts of property, will have any eſtates at all to defend. When the very exiſ-

tence

tence of ſociety hangs in dreadful ſuſpenſe between the deſperation of miſery and the deſpotiſm of the ſword, and when added to this the preſent Negociations may end in a determined and gigantic Invaſion of the Country, the conduct of our Nobility and Gentry ſeems nothing ſhort of an infatuation leading to their utter deſtruction.

On the *principles* laid down in my printed letter, I doubt not you will agree with me; but, whether or not, you will approve of what I recommend to be immediately *practiced*, I am doubtful. Much reflection, however, has convinced me that we have not time left for yielding to *prejudices* in hopes of *progreſſive* advantages to the Cauſe of Liberty. Our deſtiny is at hand. The public calamity within, and the enemy without, call for all our wiſdom and energy. Nothing but radical Reform can preſerve us from either of theſe dangers; and every week's delay adds to our difficulties, and rapidly increaſes the probability of convulſion, and all the horrors that may attend it both from within and without.

That we have not a moment to loſe in puſhing the Cauſe of Reform, appears from this, that very many Friends of Liberty, aye, very many indeed, now ſay we are *too late*. How many years was it ſaid we were too ſoon? On this ſubject I have nothing on my mind for which I can blame myſelf. From the firſt I laboured to inculcate what I conceived, and ſtill conceive to be the true principles on which Reform ought to be founded. Had thoſe principles made their way, we might have

have been *in time.* But if the Friends of Conſtitutional Liberty can, *even now*, be brought to adopt thoſe principles, and will exert themſelves manfully, it is my own particular perſuaſion that the Nation would rapidly run into a radical Reform, as the only haven that could ſave us. Within theſe very few days, I know that a hoary Borough Proprietor, and Borough *Monger*, who has been particularly deep in the dirt, declared to a patriotic friend of mine, that he believed we muſt have a Parliamentary Reform at laſt. If the People with their Petitions would come upon them like a torrent, I doubt not they would yield the point. I truſt that torrent is collecting its force, and will, ere long, begin its purifying courſe.

Your's, Dear Sir,
Very ſincerely,
J. CATWRIGHT.

P. S. In the courſe of two or three days I hope to ſend you half a dozen copies of my printed letter by the York mail coach.

LETTER VII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *April 15th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I SHALL be anxious to receive the printed letter you mention in your's of the 13th inſtant; and ſhould this note arrive in time, I wiſh you to ſend your packet by the Carliſle Coach, to be left at Mr. Fergu ſon's Inn, Catterick

terick Bridge, by which means it will reach Burton a week or ten days ſooner than if it ſhould be ſent by York.

You do not ſay that you have received my letter of the 10th inſtant; and I think indeed you could not have received it on the 13th, becauſe it was ſent to Brothertoft Farm, on the ſuppoſition of your having left London. When you get that letter you will ſee how much I agree with you in blaming the Gentry, and how little good I expect can be done till their ſentiments are become more favourable to Liberty: I mean here in Yorkſhire, where the delays which have been ſo mortifying to me, were yet abſolutely neceſſary. I truſt however that the continuance and extenſion of the War will have a great effect in bringing the Gentry into our meaſures, particularly if Popular Meetings in London and other great towns ſhould be delayed a few weeks. In that time I think, from what has lately paſſed between Denmark and this Country, that the Negociation with France is likely to be cloſed without a Peace; and our operations might commence with County Meetings not only in Yorkſhire, but in almoſt every other part of England. I wiſh you to conſider this, and to make uſe of your influence to obtain a delay which may decide the fate of the Country, whether it is to be ſaved by Reform, peaceably and conſtitutionally obtained, or ruined by a Revolution effected by the Maſs of the People, irritated by the combined evils of War and Famine, and a ſyſtem of Adminiſtration at once corrupt and coercive.

A little

A little longer patience on the part of your friends may have, as I hope, that very important effect which we agree in wiſhing; it may give the Gentry that opportunity for conviction which they ſtill want, that the dangers of a continued War exceed the riſque of Popular Oppoſition. Let them ſee *that* a little more clearly, and we ſhall have them with us; and from their taking the lead in the buſineſs, we may have the happineſs to ſee Liberty ſecured, and Revolution avoided. If, on the failure of the preſent Negociation, heſitation and timidity ſhould ſtill be found prevalent among the Yorkſhire Gentry, I muſt own my hope of any change of ſyſtem by moderate means would be greatly weakened, or rather it would be quite extinct. But I think there is reaſon to hope better things from Yorkſhire on the event of a protracted War; and a few weeks delay will probably aſcertain it. I am, with great regard,

Dear Sir,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER VIII.

From J. CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONDON, *Monday, 20th April*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

BY the Carliſle Coach I have now ſent you ſix copies of the printed letter. The ſame number were ſent to the Dukes of Grafton, Northumberland, and Bedford, and to Lord Stanhope.

Stanhope. The Duke of Grafton deſired to decline accepting, with an aſſurance that he did not know a word of the contents, "having been compelled by age and infirmity to quit the political ſcene." Had his Grace ſeen the contents, he might have ſeen that the counſel of one worn out by age and infirmity, unfitting him for action, might have carried with it additional value from that very circumſtance, as being the reſult of experience and judgment, when the paſſions could not be ſuſpected of an interference. Old and infirm as I may ever be, I truſt that while I can think and ſpeak, my counſel will never be wanting in the cauſe of Juſtice and Human Freedom.

On the ſubject of farther delay in the buſineſs of petitioning until your ſorry Squires can be brought to act like rational beings, as far as it relates to bodies with whom you think I may have an influence, I really dare not adviſe it. Indeed it appears to me to be doubly neceſſary not to delay. To remain *at this time* ſilent would give a ſort of confirmation to a certain infamous report. What in that report is called *conſpiracy* and *treaſon*, was a deſign to petition with great unanimity the Legiſlature for a Redreſs of Grievances, and particularly that greateſt of all Grievances, the want of Repreſentation. Is not this fine ground for a revival of the ſyſtem of terror? If it produce the effect of *ſilencing the People*, I fear they will be ſilent for ever, until in abſolute deſpair they burſt out in acts of violence. No! no! my friend, the conſpiracy and the treaſon is not with the People.

That

That they ſhould inſtantly come forward with their Petitions to give the lie to their falſe accuſers, and to prevent that recoil and diſguſt I dread, ſeems to me of infinite importance. It was with no ſmall difficulty their former ſullen diſcontent could be brought into a temper to petition at all; and now to be the adviſer of delay, attended, as I ſhould expect, with the worſt of conſequences, is what I dare not venture again. But general terror is not the only mode of ſilencing Petitioners; for when Petitions, ſtating the moſt infamous violations of the Conſtitution, and the moſt atrocious cruelties, are tendered to a certain Aſſembly, they are rejected, and all inquiry into their truth is refuſed, although the Petitioner himſelf be attending at the door to be called in. You will find in the parcel one of this kind. While a virtuous Member was reading it, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas were laughing aloud, by way of example how ſuch Petitions ought to be attended to; and their friends, as we may be ſure, took the hint; ſo that I am aſſured the Aſſembly was more like a bear-garden than what it ought to be. Can we have any cure of this dreadful evil until there be a voice from without loud enough to ſilence Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas? Whenever, therefore, immenſe multitudes have determined upon petitioning, they ought in my judgment to be encouraged to proceed *.

A very

* Even in a caſe like this here ſtated by the worthy Patriot, the obſervations in the preceding Note will be applicable. The queſtion of prudence will ſtill remain to be conſidered; and unleſs the

A very watchful eye is now kept over the Albion; and its Editor is the object of puniſhment, not as oft as he tranſgreſſes the law, but as oft as certain men chooſe themſelves to violate it. As it is the only Paper that will publiſh Conſtitutional Truth attended with any hazard of offending the Abuſers of Power, I hope it will be ſupported.

I leave Town on Wedneſday.

Your's very truly,

J. CARTWRIGHT.

LETTER IX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Eſq.

BURTON-HALL, *April* 23*d*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

YESTERDAY in the morning I received your letter of the 20th inſtant; and in the evening the packet which it announced, containing the copies of your printed letter addreſſed to me, with ſome other printed papers, for all which I return you my thanks. On the ſubject of your printed letter, I will take a little time for meditation, and then inform you ſincerely how far I can concur with you,

the petitioning by the multitude alluded to be more likely to promote than to retard the neceſſary meaſures of Reform, it ought not to be encouraged. To eſtimate this probability aright, it will be neceſſary to conſider whether an acceſſion of ſtrength from other quarters may be expected or not, and if not, whether the multitude wiſhing to petition are able alone, and by pacific means to carry their meaſures, or at leaſt by their moving to facilitate their beingc arried hereafter.

and

and where I muſt be obliged to take a different road in purſuit of the ſame object, viz. the Freedom and Happineſs of the Public.

With reſpect to the contents of your written letter, I will frankly own I am not ſurprized at your contempt of the major part of our Yorkſhire Gentry, many of whom are too little accuſtomed to reflection to have formed any rational judgment of our political ſituation, or any juſt principles of conduct to guide them at this extraordinary criſis. Yet as I have formerly ſaid, I think them more prejudiced and deluded by the frauds of Power than corrupted by its bribes. If, therefore, it had appeared to you, that you could with propriety, and with effect, have applied to the Popular Bodies who are preparing to petition, to prolong the pauſe which at your inſtance they conceded before, I did hope that our honeſt, but deluded Gentlemen, on the failure of this third Negociation might be induced to come forward; and thus the impending danger from Popular Reſentment might be avoided, by the influence which the Gentry would acquire among the inferior claſſes of the People. This would have been a previous ſecurity that meaſures of moderation would be purſued by the Collective Body; and powerful men would have been more readily induced to join us. But on reading your printed papers, I have found that I aſked what was too contrary to your plans to be granted; and I muſt now abandon all hope of that preventive meaſure, which would have afforded the beſt ground to hope that we may ſucceſsfully defend Liberty by the mere force of reaſon

ſon alone. Still, however, I will hope that the Gentry may come forth in ſupport of the Common Cauſe before the Die of Revolution is caſt, and may hold back the uplifted hand of the People ready to throw it. And you, my good friend *, I doubt not, will chearfully contribute your aſſiſtance then, as you did before, to induce the People of the Great Towns to liſten to their friends in the Country. When the Gentry have advanced on the right ground, though not ſo far as the Town Societies, they will be better intitled to confidence, and I hope they will obtain it.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Your's ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER X.

From JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Eſq; *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BROTHERTOFT-FARM, *8th May*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I Rejoice much in the account you give of your health, and to find you embrace every opportunity of promoting the Cauſe of Freedom.

Having left a conſiderable parcel of my letters in London, I will order ſix more copies

* This was then the firm perſuaſion of the Editor: the prudence and moderation of Major Cartwright's ſubſequent conduct in Middleſex, &c. have only tended to corroborate this perſuaſion, and to increaſe the Editor's eſteem for his character.

to be ſent you directly, and as many more at any time as you may wiſh for, ſo long as any remain. I printed only 125, as I did not intend any for ſale, unleſs circumſtances ſhould render it adviſable to have a new impreſſion.

The copies of your anſwer which you are ſo good as to intend me, may remain at Debrett's till I ſend for them, as I expect a call to Town again very ſhortly reſpecting a Bill before Parliament.

I agree with you that no external events can long divert the public attention from the ſubject of Reform; for unleſs the Nation can be wholly bereft of its feeling and its underſtanding, the day of reflection muſt come.

I have ſome reaſon to think that an event which has lately been thought not very diſtant, might, if it took place, produce great internal change. But at all events I hold it to be extremely deſirable to loſe no opportunity of diſpoſing the Public Mind to that which is right.

It ſhould ſeem as if petitioning in a certain quarter has been voluntarily ſuſpended for the preſent. I ſuſpect that ſome of my correſpondence has been intercepted, as I have had no anſwers to the letters I wrote, while the Acts for ſuſpending the Habeas Corpus and reviving Pitt's Bill were pending. In thoſe letters I ſpoke very plain. If Miniſters have ſtopped petitioning by their ſyſtem of terror, their purpoſes will have been anſwered for the preſent.

I thank you for your enquiries after my health. I think it rather improved this laſt year

year on the whole; but not being equal to much labour, beſides what is neceſſary to the management of my private concerns, I very much wiſh to narrow them, as I would wiſh to devote more of my time to better things than farming, &c. &c.

You do not yet talk of viſiting the Capital this Spring. I wiſh you might before the general diſperſion.

With great eſteem, believe me your's,
Dear Sir,
Very ſincerely,
JOHN CARTWRIGHT.

NUMBER XXV.

Containing the EDITOR'S *Correſpondence with* LORD HOLLAND, *in the year* 1799.

LETTER I.

From LORD HOLLAND *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for the favour you have done me in ſending me your Vindication of Seceſſion, in the peruſal of which I have received much pleaſure, though I confeſs I am apprehenſive that the meaſure will fail to produce the effect intended, as the thorough indifference of the People to all Conſtitutional, if not, even to financial queſtions, ſeems to afford little hope of their being awakened to their real ſituation*. I am,

Sir,

With great reſpect,

Your obedient humble ſervant,

HOLLAND.

LONDON, *Feb.* 5, 1799.

LETTER

* The Editor was anxious to obtain Lord Holland's conſent to the publication of this letter, not merely becauſe it affords a proof, however highly valued, that the performance on Seceſſion was approved by this Noble Patriot, who is animated by the kindred ſpirit of his Uncle, and like him diſtinguiſhed by his eloquence, and by his zeal for Conſtitutional Liberty; but more particularly becauſe it ſhows that Lord Holland, though on ſome few occaſions he did attend in the Houſe of Lords, after the Seceſſion had

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to* LORD HOLLAND.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 5th*, 1799.

My Lord,

I AM happy to find from your obliging letter that my Vindication of the Seceſſion is fortunate enough to meet your Lordſhip's approbation. In the preſent gloomy ſtate of Public Affairs, I am perhaps as much inclined as your Lordſhip to deſpond; for who can hope to ſucceed where the Seceders have failed in an attempt to rouze and animate the People to a juſt ſenſe of their ſituation? Yet after many defeats which the Defenders of the Conſtitution muſt expect to receive, I have the fulleſt confidence, that their efforts will finally prove ſucceſsful. Wealth, luxury, and great proſperity have corrupted the People; and no exertions could poſſibly ſupport the Cauſe of Liberty, I believe, without the correction of Adverſity, to which the meaſures of Miniſters ſeem inevitably to conduct us. Under this perſuaſion, hope may be preſerved amidſt the moſt diſcouraging appearances of apathy and

had taken place, yet he concurred with his illuſtrious Relation and the Band of Seceded Patriots of each Houſe in thinking that their Seceſſion was warranted by the ſtate of Parliament at that time, and juſtified by the principles of the Conſtitution, although it might fail, in ſome reſpects, to produce the expected effects.

The conſent of Lord Holland was given in the moſt obliging manner; the Editor feels himſelf doubly indebted to his Lordſhip for his conſent, and for the very kind expreſſions with which it was accompanied; and he requeſts Lord Holland to accept his grateful acknowledgments.

infatuation; and the humbleſt individual may truſt that even his feeble aid may not be wholly uſeleſs.

The ſtruggle, in all probability, will be long and ſevere. I ſincerely wiſh that your Lordſhip may have the honour and happineſs to contribute, greatly by your powerful exertions, to decide in favour of the Public the iſſue of a conteſt on which the welfare of millions depends.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's moſt faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXVI.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with* Dr. KNOX *in the years* 1799 *and* 1804.

LETTER I.

From the Rev. Dr. KNOX *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Rev. Sir,

PERMIT me to return you my thanks for your moſt excellent Pamphlet, in "*Vindication of the Seceſſion from Parliament.*" I read it with delight. It is admirably written, and abounds with argument and information. I wiſh the ears of the Public were not cloſed by prejudice, and become like thoſe of the deaf adder. If this were not the caſe, you would be liſtened to; and you would convince; but in the preſent circumſtances, I fear nothing but calamity will remove the general infatuation.

I am ſorry to read in the laſt page that you are "bowed with infirmities." I perceive no ſymptoms of them in your compoſition; and I hope you will live to ſee the day when due reſpect ſhall be paid to your long, faithful, and able exertions in the Cauſe of Public Virtue *.

* This is the light in which the Friends of Reform always conſider the controverſy in which they are engaged; to beat down corruption is the end of their exertions, and to promote that end is to promote the joint Cauſe of Liberty and Virtue.

I think myſelf highly honoured by your remembrance of me, and the compliment paid me in ſending your Tract for my peruſal. I ſhall inſert it in one of the three Volumes which you gave me ſome time ago, and which I greatly value.

I have not ſeen your Tract advertiſed yet; but I ſee only one or two Newſpapers. I think you have no occaſion to apprehend any thing from the vengeance of Power; but I ſhould be concerned that you ſhould be in danger. Tractari mollius ætas imbecilla volet.

May eaſe and honour attend your decline of life, as ability and patriotic labours have markedits progreſs *.

Accept my beſt wiſhes and acknowledgments, and believe me, Rev. Sir,

With the higheſt reſpect,

Your obliged, humble ſervant,

V. KNOX.

TUNBRIDGE, *March 13th*, 1799.

* In performing the taſk he has undertaken, the Editor has frequently experienced difficulties which he knew neither how to avoid, nor how completely to overcome: He has been obliged either to omit letters which for public reaſons ought to be inſerted in this Collection, or, by inſerting them, to expoſe himſelf to the imputation of vanity. He neither feels nor affects a ſtoical indifference to the praiſe of wiſe and good men. When Dr. Knox or Mr. Reynolds, Dr. Fenwick or Mr. Bigge expreſs their approbation of his conduct, or of his compoſitions, it is more than an encouragement, it is a reward of great value. Yet he truſts that in ſelecting for publication their commendatory letters, or other letters of a ſimilar deſcription, his choice has been determined by no improper motive. For reaſons which it is not neceſſary here to detail, many ſuch letters have been ſuppreſſed; the reſt are exhibited, becauſe in the Editor's opinion, except in their partiality to him, they contain ſome ſpecimen of his Correſpondents' excellent judgment, ſome proof of their talents and virtues, of their moderate views of Reform, or of their attachment to the Conſtitution; or elſe they furniſh documents which evidently demonſtrate the miſery and diſcontent of the People, the accumulation

of

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the* Rev. Dr. Knox.

Burton-Hall, *Nov.* 20*th*, 1804.

Sir,

ON the other half ſheet of my paper, a letter of your's is tranſcribed for your inſpection, which I had the honour to receive in 1799, and which, if you ſhould ſee in it nothing to diſapprove in any more important reſpect than your too partial praiſe of my performance on Seceſſion, I ſhould be happy to receive your permiſſion to inſert it in my Sixth, and probably laſt Volume of Papers which I am preparing for the preſs. I think the Cauſe of Public Virtue cannot be better ſerved, by me at leaſt, than by producing ſuch papers as the letter in queſtion; and I ſhall feel that my plea for the calumniated Friends of Conſtitutional Liberty is much fortified by your permiſſion to lay it before the Public. It is a letter written in the true ſpirit of moderation and rational Liberty, by a Moraliſt and a Divine, whom the Public has long held in high reſpect.

In the letter copied for your peruſal there are ſome very kind expreſſions concerning my health, which had then been much in-

of abuſes, the oppreſſions of the Adminiſtration, and the danger of our invaluable Conſtitution. That theſe advantages to his Cauſe might not be loſt, the Editor rejected the counſels of a falſe delicacy, and ſubdued the fears of a miſtaken modeſty; and he truſts his apology for having thus dared to publiſh the letters alluded to, will be accepted by the candid Reader.

jured

jured by an acute diſeaſe. From that diſeaſe I have the pleaſure to aſſure you I have recovered to a degree of ſtrength not commonly enjoyed at my age. Yet I muſt now conſider myſelf as one paſt any freſh exertion in the ſcene of active life, whoſe public courſe is over, and who can now only ſtate to his deluded Fellow-Citizens what he and his Correſpondents wiſhed to have done; but who ſtill retains the warmeſt wiſhes for final ſucceſs to the Cauſe, and even dares to hope in the proſtrate condition of the Nation at this moment, that its ſucceſs may be in ſome degree promoted, by publiſhing the ſentiments of ſo many wiſe and honourable men who correſponded with him, in concurrence with thoſe of Dr. Knox.

It will give me pleaſure to hear, Sir, that you alſo enjoy good health, in addition to the many other ſources of comfort and enjoyment which conduct like your's alone can open. I am, Sir,

With moſt ſincere eſteem,

Your very faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. Dr. KNOX *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

TUNBRIDGE, *Nov. 27th*, 1804.

Dear Sir,

I DO aſſure you that your remembrance of me is very flattering. I can claim no merit but that of perſeverance and conſiſtency.

Under

Under all diſcouragement I am happy to find in my heart the ſame ardent love of Liberty and the Conſtitution of my Country which I felt from the firſt moment I was able to think and feel as a man. My party, if I am of any party, is the party of humanity. I wiſhed to ſtop the wanton effuſion of human blood, and the indeſcribable woes of War. Nothing would conduce ſo much to theſe great ends as a Reform of Parliament. For theſe ſentiments I have been calumniated, and deeply injured. But my mind is not depreſſed. The glorious Cauſe I eſpouſed is ſtill dear to my heart; and there is no labour nor ſuffering (little as I pretend to heroiſm) which I am not ready to undergo, under the guidance of reaſon and moderation, in ſupport of it.

I deplore what has happened in France. It hurts, and will for ages hurt the Cauſe of Liberty and Humanity throughout the Globe. But Liberty and Humanity are not mere names; they claim the love and the ſupport of every good man, however he may be depreſſed for a time by neglect or perſecution. I have no doubt but that the day will come when your ſentiments and mine (allow me to aſſimilate them) will be not only honoured, but adopted and followed. I will live upon the hope. I will pierce through the clouds which at preſent darken our atmoſphere, and behold in imagination what I may not live to ſee in reality, the ſerenity of Univerſal Peace, one momentous conſequence of cleanſing the Augean Stable.

Pardon

Pardon my ardour: I ought not to be ſo warmly diffuſe when writing to one who has uniformly evinced that he wants no ſtimulus to the exertions of true Patriotiſm. I rejoice to hear that you are bleſſed with a freſh and happy old age.

I alſo enjoy health, independence, plenty, and tranquillity, and am truly thankful for your kind enquiries *. I remain, Dear Sir,

With the greateſt reſpect,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

V. KNOX.

* It was the earneſt wiſh of the Editor to obtain the permiſſion of Dr. Knox to publiſh theſe letters; and he offers him his thanks with a truly grateful ſenſibility for having given him that permiſſion, and alſo for the very kind manner in which it was given.

The publication of theſe letters appeared to the Editor to be extremely deſirable on various accounts. The character of their Author, as a Moraliſt and a Divine, has long been held in great and deſerved reſpect by the Public; but his merit as a Politician has been leſs juſtly appreciated. In conſequence of his political exertions he has been calumniated and deeply injured; and even his amiable private character could not ſhield him from groſs inſult in a public Theatre in circumſtances which much aggravated the outrage, when Dr. Knox was accompanied by perſons whom he was bound by every tie of duty and affection to protect. (See Dr. Knox's account of this outrage publiſhed ſoon after the beginning of the firſt War with the French Republic.) It is fit that juſtice ſhould be done to the patriotic character of Dr. Knox; it is important to the Friends of Reform as well as to him, that the Public ſhould be more diſtinctly informed concerning his ſentiments, his political views, and the prevailing temper of his mind; that it ſhould learn to conſider him, as he is indeed, a Patriot on the very principles of Chriſtianity, whoſe attachment to the Conſtitution is unqueſtionable, whoſe zeal to preſerve it on its genuine principles is ardent even to enthuſiaſm, yet duly tempered by reaſon and moderation; who is a determined opponent of our ambitious and unneceſſary Wars, becauſe he is a friend to humanity; and a ſtrenuous ſupporter of Political Reform, becauſe he is a friend to virtue. It is important to the Public itſelf alſo, that it ſhould ſee Dr. Knox as he is, not as he has been miſrepreſented by the vile retainers of Power; and if by their calumnies it has been led to diſtruſt a man whoſe views are wiſe and benevolent, that it ſhould be undeceived; that it ſhould learn to reſpect him as it ought, and to imitate that conduct which it cannot but approve.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXVII.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with the* DUKE *of* GRAFTON.

NOTE I.

From the DUKE *of* GRAFTON *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

PICCADILLY, *April 30th*, 1792.

THE Duke of Grafton preſents his compliments to Mr. Wyvill, and returns him many thanks for the honour he has done him by the preſent of his *Defence**, *&c.*

The Duke of Grafton begs leave to aſſure him that at any rate he ſhould eagerly have peruſed a publication to which Mr. Wyvill had put his name. May the Duke of Grafton be allowed to add how very much Mr. Wyvill's ſentiments and apprehenſions accord with his own?

NOTE II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* GRAFTON.

MR. Wyvill preſents his compliments to the Duke of Grafton, and returns his Grace many thanks for the honour of his obliging

* The Defence of Dr. Price and the Reformers of England.

note,

note, which, having been directed to Richmond, did not reach Conſtable Burton till this evening. Mr. Wyvill is extremely happy to find that a publication of his, recommending moderate improvements in our Civil Conſtitution, and in our Church Eſtabliſhment, is fortunate enough to receive the approbation of the Duke of Grafton; and ſincerely wiſhes that his powerful influence, united with that of other diſtinguiſhed Friends of their Country, may prevail with thoſe men who reſiſt all Reformation, to drop their oppoſition in time, and concede with a good grace that temperate correction of abuſes in the State and Church which would at preſent content the Nation. He even flatters himſelf notwithſtanding ſome late unfavourable ſpeeches in Parliament, that objections to a Reform in the Repreſentation of the People, which are grounded merely on the circumſtances of the time, or on the mode of moving it, will be over-ruled by thoſe declarations of the public opinion which may be expected next Winter from many reſpectable Diſtricts.

But till that eſſential Reform has been obtained, there ſeems little reaſon to hope that the Repeal of the Teſt Act can be procured, or that the imperfections of our Church ſyſtem will be in the ſmalleſt degree removed.

BURTON-HALL, *near* BEDALE,
Yorkſhire, May 4th, 1792.

LETTER

LETTER I.

From the DUKE *of* GRAFTON *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

EUSTON, *Feb. 6th*, 1799.

Sir,

I Have read with great ſatisfaction the able Defence * you have publiſhed in ſupport of thoſe who have endeavoured to the utmoſt, firſt, to avert that infatuation which has driven the Nation into a ſituation ſo full of diſtreſs that admits no longer of the hope of ſeeing it relieved without ſome dreadful convulſion; and have now, on failing in thoſe aſſiduous attempts, retired from their ſeats, waiting for ſome turn of affairs which may render them of uſe to their Country. Allow me to return you my beſt thanks for the favour you conferred by ſending it to me, and to aſſure you, that I admire much the ſteady uprightneſs with which you are ever attending to the true intereſts of a much-deluded Nation.

I have the honour to be,
Rev. Sir,
With great regard and eſteem,
Your very faithful
and obedient ſervant,
GRAFTON.

LETTER

* The Seceſſion Vindicated.

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* GRAFTON.

BURTON-HALL, 12*th Feb* 1799.

My Lord,

I Have juſt received your Grace's favour of the 6th inſtant; and I loſe no time to return my ſincereſt acknowledgments for the many kind expreſſions of your approbation and eſteem, which, coming from a Stateſman at once a judge and an example of patriotic virtue, cannot but afford me the greateſt pleaſure and encouragement even in theſe perilous times. I have endeavoured to do my duty; and I truſt it will not be eaſy for any one, however powerful and malicious, to induce a Jury of my Countrymen, deluded as they are in many reſpects, to condemn what I feel to have been an act of honeſt zeal for the welfare of the Public. I expect obloquy and reproach, without fearing them. And if proſecution and oppreſſion ſhould be the added conſequences of my conduct, conſcious integrity, and the approbation of ſuch men as yourſelf, I truſt will be my ſufficient ſupport.

I have the honour to be,
With high reſpect,
My Lord,
Your Grace's moſt faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

NOTE

NOTE III.

From the DUKE *of* GRAFTON *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

THE Duke of Grafton preſents his compliments to Mr. Wyvill, and returns him many thanks for the honour he has done him in ſending him his late Publication of Papers on a buſineſs in which Mr. Wyvill took a part ſo conſiderable and diſtinguiſhed; the ill ſucceſs of which the Duke of Grafton will never ceaſe to deplore.

EUSTON, *near* THETFORD,
Sept. 11*th*, 1802.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* GRAFTON.

BURTON-HALL, *Sept.* 13*th*, 1802.

My Lord,

I Haſten to acknowledge the honour of your Grace's moſt obliging note, dated Sept. 11th, and to expreſs the very great ſatisfaction I feel from this freſh mark of your approbation of my public conduct.

Permit me to add, that your Grace's long continued eſteem and kindneſs prompt me to be open; and I feel at this moment, while addreſſing one of thoſe perſons whom I moſt highly honour, that my diffidence is overcome by the certainty of his candour and good will.

Advanced in years, and now retired in the bosom of a family whom I tenderly love, I look back on the paſt ſtruggle for Conſtitutional Liberty, unſucceſsful as it was, with the utmoſt ſatisfaction, reſpecting the principles on which that ſtruggle was conducted; and with a confident expectation that the Nation will be convinced, not only that the views of the County Aſſociations, &c. in 1780, were prudently limited; but what is of ſtill greater importance, that your Grace, and other diſtinguiſhed Stateſmen who countenanced their meaſures, were actuated by motives of the pureſt patriotiſm, and a wiſe and provident anxiety to preſerve the Conſtitution from thoſe oppoſite calamities which equally threaten its ruin. Had the honeſt exertions of the Country Gentlemen, by the ſupport of the beſt and ableſt Stateſmen, at that time, ſucceeded, the fears and jealouſies which brought on the late terrible War would have been precluded by a timely and moderate Reform. Incalculable would have been its benefit in that view; and therefore the infatuation of the major part of the Counties, who ſuffered the golden opportunity in 1785 to be loſt, can never be too much regretted. Their ſubſequent infatuation from 1792 to the end of the War, was greater ſtill, and more deplorable. Yet events ſince the cloſe of the War ſeem to afford a hope that the ancient vigour of our Countrymen is not exhauſted, and that an abject ſubmiſſion to Deſpotiſm will not degrade them in the eyes of their poſterity. That the ſtruggle for National Freedom will ſoon be renewed, is my belief;

that it may be conducted peacefully on the principles of the Conſtitution, is my anxious wiſh; and that it may be finally ſucceſsful, is my hope and earneſt prayer. While your Grace and Mr. Fox are preſerved to us, while Lord Lanſdown lives, while the Duke of Norfolk, Mr. Grey, and the other tried Friends of the Conſtitntion unite their ſupport, I cannot deſpond, even after the loſs of the Duke of Bedford *. Wtih

* Francis Duke of Bedford, whoſe life had been cut ſhort in the middle of his age, by an acute diſeaſe not long before the date of this letter: his death was juſtly lamented as a national miſfortune, not only by his numerous friends, but by worthy men of every claſs and deſcription. He was ardently attached to the Conſtitution; and he adhered to the Cauſe of moderate Reform with fortitude and conſiſtency. Reſolute to diſcourage Republican Schemes of Innovation, he was equally determined to ſupport the Rights of the People; and in the ſtormy ſeaſon of our War with the French Republic, he ſteered that middle courſe with the Duke of Grafton and his Illuſtrious Friend in the Lower Houſe which was beſt calculated to repel the dangers which on each hand threatened ruin to our Liberty. When his Anceſtor, Lord Ruſſel, expoſed his life to danger, the object aimed at was worthy of the riſque; it was to maintain Property and National Freedom againſt the Deſpotiſm of the Stuarts. When Lord Ruſſel's Deſcendant and his Friends oppoſed the evil meaſures of Mr. Pitt's firſt Adminiſtration, they wiſely followed his example, and with equal vigour, but greater regularity, defended the principles of the Conſtitution againſt the agrarian projects of Paine and his Anarchal Adherents, and againſt the daring attempts of the Miniſter to infringe the ineſtimable Rights ſolemnly declared and pledged to the Nation at the æra of the Revolution. And though theſe virtuous Stateſmen were baffled in their attempt to prevent the violation of our Rights, and to deſtroy the ſyſtem of Corruption, and at laſt were obliged to ſecede from a Parliament obſtinately deaf to their counſels, yet their zeal was rewarded with moſt important ſucceſs. Supported by the juſtice of their meaſures, by the high reſpect of the ſounder part of the Public, and by the attachment of a Noble Band of Patriots in Parliament, though far outnumbered by the Tools of Office, they were formidable even in their retirement; the Strafford of modern times feared to proceed to farther extremities; and the Nation has ſtill a Conſtitution to defend and improve. On his Seceſſion from a hopeleſs attendance in Parliament, our Noble Patriot's leiſure was devoted

With ſincereſt wiſhes for your Grace's health, and that you may have the felicity to aſſiſt in reſtoring Conſtitutional Liberty, I conclude, and am, with high reſpect,

My Lord,
Your much obliged,
and moſt faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* DUKE *of* GRAFTON.

BURTON-HALL, *June 3d*, 1805.

My Lord,

I Should be extremely ſorry to treſpaſs on your Grace's goodneſs which I have ſo often experienced;

voted to plan and execute extenſive buildings for the accommodation and embelliſhment of the Capital; and to promote the improvement of Agriculture, by a courſe of experiments of the wideſt range, calculated to aſcertain the comparative advantages of various modes of cultivation, and of different breeds of animals, to promote the invention of uſeful implements of Huſbandry, to diſſeminate the knowledge already acquired, and to encourage freſh diſcoveries. By many of our Great Proprietors, the culture of our lands has been much neglected; but the Duke of Bedford juſtly conſidered that excellence in Agriculture would be the beſt foundation of our National Strength and Security. Theſe were plans of uſeful magnificence; and never did a private Individual employ his leiſure, and expend a large portion of a princely income more laudably, or more beneficially to the Public.

At the cloſe of his life, under the preſſure of a moſt ſevere and rapid diſeaſe, the Duke of Bedford manifeſted the feelings of a mind at once affectionate and magnanimous; and as he had lived but to defend our endangered Conſtitution on the principles for which his Anceſtor had bled on the Scaffold, ſo, like him, he met death in a different ſhape, with equal fortitude, and ſimilar dignity and ſelf-poſſeſſion. This tribute of juſtice to the memory of a Nobleman ſo accompliſhed, ſo generous, and conſiſtent, the Editor feels it a duty to pay. And he adds with extreme ſatisfaction, that his Noble Brother, who is the heir of his Peerage and his fortune, inherits his virtues, and nobly emulates him in all his patriotic purſuits.

perienced; and highly as I value the incloſed proofs of your approbation of my political conduct and writings, I ſhould forbear to give you this trouble, and to requeſt your conſent to their publication in my Sixth Volume, if the only end I held in view were merely perſonal, to ſhelter myſelf and my reputation under the Duke of Grafton's long-eſtabliſhed authority.

All attempts, indeed, have hitherto proved unavailing to correct the Abuſes of the Conſtitution, and thus to defend Public Liberty againſt the influence of the Crown, increaſed as it has been to an alarming extent, by our almoſt perpetual Wars. But I am ſanguine enough to hope that the ſtruggle for Reform will never be diſcontinued till the Friends of their Country and its Conſtitution have prevailed againſt the ſupporters of that ſyſtem of corruption which is the ſource of all our dangers, foreign and domeſtic.

At the beginning of the ſtruggle alluded to, the Advocates of Reform were aware how much they were protected by the favourable ſentiments which the patriotiſm of Lord Chatham had occaſionally thrown out; and they endeavoured to avail themſelves of his authority. But it will be of ſtill greater importance to that Band of younger Patriots, by whom the ſtruggle for Reform may be continued, that they can ſhow diſtinctly, that after Lord Chatham's time, the Duke of Grafton, Lord Lanſdown, and Mr. Fox agreed with him, in thinking that, to ſave the Conſtitution, it muſt be radically reformed; and that they can alſo aſcertain the ſpecific propoſitions for reforming

it, which they ſtrenuouſly ſupported, and which Lord Chatham himſelf could but wiſh and predict *.

Under this view of the caſe, I feel that my wiſh to unite your letters with thoſe of Mr. Fox and Lord Lanſdown, (whoſe recent loſs we have ſo great reaſon to lament) and the endeavour

* It is an ancient ſaying, and not the worſe for its antiquity, "that it were well for mankind if Kings were Philoſophers, or Philoſophers were Kings." To ſecure the progreſſive happineſs of Nations, Power ſhould be lodged in the hands of men who have at once the wiſdom to ſuggeſt the means of improvement, and the benevolence to adopt them.

In England, as in other Kingdoms, it has ſeldom happened that the King could juſtly pretend to the character of a Philoſopher; and it has not happened much more frequently, that the Miniſters he has employed have poſſeſſed that philoſophic mind which was denied to him. Yet they have frequently been eloquent and able men; and in the purſuit of National Aggrandizement, if that could conſtitute the felicity of a Nation, they have been ſufficiently ſucceſsful. But rather is it to be feared that their ſucceſs has been too great. For in proportion to her increaſing wealth and power, England has ſeen her Conſtitution impaired, and her domeſtic felicity deeply injured, if not irretrievably ruined, by the growth of political abuſes, which at once have degraded the character of the People, and extended the undue influence of the Crown to a degree which is inconſiſtent with the enjoyment of rational Liberty. Whence has this diſparity ariſen between the increaſing grandeur of the State and the declining happineſs of the People? How has it happened that a ſucceſſion of Miniſters, who for ages paſt have promoted with almoſt conſtant ſucceſs the increaſe of our National Wealth and our Territorial Aggrandizement, have not exerted equal ability, or not with equal ſucceſs, to promote the private happineſs of the People, to ſecure their Rights, and to diffuſe more and more widely among them the bleſſings of Liberty, and the love of Juſtice, with the ſenſe of manly dignity and honour? It has happened becauſe our Public Men have too frequently been deficient, not in ability, but in patriotiſm; not in ſkill, but in zeal to promote the true welfare of the Community. When placed in official ſtations, they have too commonly wanted the magnanimous ſpirit which could prompt them to correct abuſes, uſeful indeed to the corrupt ſupport of power, but pernicious to the morals and the felicity of the People.

In their youth they have uſually begun their public lives with profeſſions of zeal for Liberty and Popular Rights; and it is not improbable

deavour to preſerve, if ſuch a Publication can preſerve theſe memorials of your Grace's ſentiments and theirs, will not incur your diſapprobation, even if for reaſons which I do not foreſee, you ſhould be obliged to withhold your compliance. If no ſuch reaſon ſhould occur to your Grace, I beg leave to add that your

improbable, that, in the earlier ſtages of their political courſe, their intentions have been good, and they have really felt what they profeſſed, a patriotic zeal to defend the Freedom of the People, and to reſtore the purity of our Conſtitution. But when hackneyed in the ways of Miniſterial Buſineſs, and accuſtomed to behold in many who ſurround them, a ſtrong propenſity to corruption, they have been led inſenſibly, by their attachment to power, firſt to tolerate this propenſity; after that, to conſider it with complacence, as uſeful to their intereſt: hence, by degrees, they have become relaxed in their political morality; they have connived at the irregular practice of others, and even in their own have adopted irregularities ſtill more extenſively miſchievous, not ſcorning to apply the means of corruption to others, yet vainly hoping to cover their guilt by the plea that the Corrupter is not himſelf corrupt. Thus it has become too much the habitual effect of their ſtation to deſtroy their ſenſibility to honeſt fame, and the finer feelings of integrity and patriotiſm. It would be folly therefore to expect, that a Miniſter who has been ſo inured to the vices of his ſtation will ſacrifice or hazard his power for the Cauſe of Liberty and Virtue. By protecting abuſes, by ſtifling inquiries, and by ſcreening malverſation in office, he fortifies himſelf in the poſſeſſion of power; and he little regards how much the character of his Countrymen may thus be debaſed and fitted for ſervitude.

In this dearth of patriotiſm, in this paucity of Miniſterial Men who unite with their power the diſpoſition to make a generous uſe of it, to what claſs or deſcription of Citizens can the Nation look for political deliverance? Not ſurely to men, did they even poſſeſs the talents and virtues of a Jebb or a Fenwick, whoſe lives have been ſpent chiefly in privacy, and in profeſſional ſtudies; who know not men and their opinions; who are unpracticed in political affairs, and inconſiderable in perſonal weight.

Such are the men, perhaps, with no exception, to whom the taſk has been committed to advocate the Cauſe of their Fellow-Citizens. They have indeed ſtated the Grievances which the Public endures, and aſſiſted it to articulate its complaint. They have indeed aſcertained the malady under which the Parliament is languiſhing; and they have ſuggeſted remedies by which the ſanity of the patient might be reſtored. But having done this, they

aſſent to my requeſt will be a great favour, and an honour conferred upon me, which I ſhall feel with grateful ſenſibility.

I am, with high reſpect,
My Lord,
Your Grace's moſt obliged,
and faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

can do nothing more. Their commiſſion is ended, their taſk is finiſhed; but a far more arduous and important taſk remains to be performed by other men. The unwilling patient muſt be perſuaded to ſwallow the bitter potion of Reform; the Oligarchal Parliament muſt be induced to ſubmit to the neceſſary correctives which alone can free it from the poiſon of corruption, reſtore its vigour, and ſecure its permanent exiſtence; and men more adequate to this important taſk alone can perform it.

Fortunately for the Nation, it has to look for this greateſt of Public Services to a Band of Senators who are equal to the difficulties which attend their attempt; who deſerve the confidence of the Crown, and eventually may obtain it. Among theſe, ſome have been placed before in the chief ſtations of our Government, and have receded from them, with minds too magnanimous to hold any parley with corruption, who have acquired in office that experience and practical wiſdom which muſt conſummate the Reformer, but have withdrawn from their ſtations with all their original dignity of mind, and with a zeal for truth, juſtice, and liberty, which the poſſeſſion of power could not abate. Such in the former part of this Reign was Lord Chatham; and ſuch, near its cloſe, is this Noble Duke, whoſe correſpondence with the Editor, ſhort as it is, and certainly not intended for the inſpection of the Public, aſcertains the ſteady patriotiſm of his character, and his generous attachment to the Cauſe of Reformation, Civil and Eccleſiaſtical.

For his permiſſion to publiſh theſe papers, the Editor's thanks are due to the Duke of Grafton; and he pays them with heartfelt gratitude and reſpect to a man, who, lik Lord Chatham before him, unites in his character the merits of the Philoſopher and the Chriſtian, the experienced Stateſman and the Patriot.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXVIII.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

LETTER I.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

HARTLEPOOL, *near* STOCKTON,
June 3d, 1793.

My Lord,

RESPECT for the names of Buchan and Erſkine is the occaſion of this trouble to your Lordſhip, and I truſt will alſo be its excuſe. Among the Papers of the Yorkſhire Committee there is a letter addreſſed by your Lordſhip to that Body, through Mr. Gray *, their Clerk, about twelve years ago, on the ſtate of Public Affairs at that time, and on the efforts of the Committee in favour of Liberty and Political Reformation. Conſidering this letter as a public letter to the Committee, I ſent a copy of it ſome months ago, to be printed in a Collection of Papers which is now nearly ready for publication. But it has occurred to me, that however properly that letter may be conſidered as a public one, circumſtances may have taken place, long ſince that letter was written, which may induce your Lordſhip to wiſh the letter in queſtion may not appear in

* For this letter to Mr. Gray, ſee page 322 of the 1ſt Volume of the Editor's Political Papers.

this

this Collection. Should this be your Lordſhip's deſire, the letter ſhall be immediately cancelled; if not, it will remain in its preſent place; and it will undoubtedly be conſidered one of the moſt valuable pieces in the Collection. There is another letter of a ſubſequent date *, which I had the honour to receive from your Lordſhip, on the ſubject of Political Reformation, more particularly reſpecting the plan adopted by the County of York near the cloſe of the year 1782. This letter, alſo, if you have no objection, my Lord, I very much wiſh to inſert in a Fourth Volume, which at ſome future undetermined period I propoſe adding to the three which will come out in the courſe of this ſummer. My Collection, I am ſenſible, will be much graced by the inſertion of both theſe letters; and the letters themſelves will ſtand in a ſituation not unworthy of them, near thoſe from Earl Stanhope, Sir George Savile, and other ſtrenuous and diſintereſted Friends of Public Liberty.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient,
and humble ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

* Two letters were written by Lord Buchan to the Editor about the time here alluded to, the firſt of which relates to the plan adopted by the County of York on the 1ſt of November, 1782; the ſecond to "the draught of two Bills which were to be circulated by the Friends of Political Reform in Scotland, for the purpoſe of receiving an option or general approbation of thoſe concerned, with a view to ground upon it a Petition to the Houſe of Commons for the propoſed Bill or Bills of Reformation." For the firſt of theſe letters by Lord Buchan, ſee page 523 of the 4th Volume of Political Papers: for the ſecond, ſee page 525 of the ſame Volume.

LETTER

LETTER II.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, *June 9th*, 1793.

Rev. Sir,

ALthough I do not preciſely recollect the contents of the letters you do me the honour to mention in your's of the third current, I am ſo uniform in my public ſentiments, and ſo much convinced that you would not think of ſending any thing to the preſs that had not a tendency to promote Public Good, that I leave the expediency of ſuffering them to go forth entirely at your own diſpoſal *.

In the corrupt ſtate of this Commercial Country, I have always entertained great doubts of the efficacy of the beſt projects for Reform, and yet have as uniformly ſeen the neceſſity of *ſomething being quickly done* to put ſomething in train for reſtoring the integrity of the Legiſlative Body, and the confidence of the People. Nobody can impute any thing that I have ever ſaid or done to any other motive than a deſire to promote the welfare of my Country, and of Society in general; and with the conſciouſneſs of this, I live retired from the world as a private man, yet nowiſe fugitive from any

* In conſequence of the truſt, in the Editor's diſcretion, which the Earl of Buchan here expreſſed in terms ſo honourable to himſelf and the Editor, his Lordſhip's letter of the 12th of December, 1782, was inſerted in the 4th Vol. of Political Papers, although his permiſſion had been aſked and obtained for the publication only of his letters of a prior date to Mr. Gray and the Editor. In this caſe it was thought unneceſſary to repeat the application for Lord Buchan's conſent.

parti-

participation in what may be thought, *by wiſe and good men*, as incumbent on my ſtation.

Unagitated by the troubles of the times, I continue to think bravely of the Public Cauſe, and will always be ready to give it the utmoſt ſupport it can derive from my opinion.

I am, Reverend and reſpected Sir,
Your obedient humble ſervant,
BUCHAN.

LETTER III.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

KIRK-HILL, *May 29th*, 1797.

Reverend Sir,

IF ever my conduct and our former correſpondence in happier times ſhould occur to your recollection, I figure to myſelf that the profound ſilence I have obſerved on the political ſubjects which have agitated our Country and Nation ſince the year 1791, and my total abſtinence from political action during a period ſo calculated to excite all the feelings I formerly expreſſed, muſt have appeared to you extraordinary, and perhaps unjuſtifiable.

It is for this reaſon, conſidering the juſt eſteem I entertain for your character and conduct, that I have thought proper to make you the depoſitory of the motives that have inclined me to ſecede ſo early from mingling in the crowd of party politicians, and after preaching

preaching calmly the political judgments to come for more than thirty years paſt, to build for myſelf and for my family, and for the children of peace, and order, and benevolence, an ark into which with me they may aſcend, and float upon the waters of a political deluge, which is at hand. In the year 1765, when I had only attained the 23d year of my age, I became intimately acquainted with the eminent William Pitt, the father of the preſent Phaeton of Britiſh Affairs, and by him in the ſucceeding year I was introduced to the threſhhold of a political career, by an appointment to go to Spain, as Secretary of the Embaſſy to Spain for the adjuſtment of the Manilla Ranſom. The confidential converſations I had with Mr. Pitt at that time, however, gave me ſo perfect a knowledge of the ſlippery ground on which he himſelf ſtood, and the little good I could expect from that, as well as other circumſtances, to accompliſh either for myſelf or the Country, that I ſeized the apology of my father's dangerous illneſs to retire from office.

Mr. Pitt and my father had been *Chums* at Utrecht, and in great habits of intimacy, ſo that unaccommodating and unfriendly as he was in diſpoſition, I obtained a great ſhare of his familiarity and regard.

Mr. Pitt had ſtarted as the ſpringing ſpaniel of the Country, or Stuart Party in England, and by means of Lady Yarmouth and his own ambition became, by and by, the Champion of the Hanoverian or Whig Government, which at that time was forced to ſuſtain itſelf upon puritanical principles, vibrating from their triumphant

triumphant eſtabliſhment at the end of the Civil Wars in the laſt Century by the Revolution.

I ſaw clearly, even in thoſe days of my intimacy with Mr. Pitt, that a ſyſtematic plan was formed to plant the abſolute dominion of the new Dynaſty on the policy of the Roman Auguſtus, by rendering the Senate a mere tool of Government, to enſlave the People under the maſque of the old Commonwealth, and without the danger of inſurrection, Patrician or Plebeian, gradually to ſuperſede even the Oligarchy itſelf in poſſeſſion of a Majority of the Houſe of Commons. Convinced therefore of my inability with a ſafe conſcience to aſcend the ladder of political promotion in Britain, I took my foot from the firſt ſtep, and retired to the Country in Scotland, dedicating myſelf to agriculture, to ſcience, and to elegant literature.

Through the medium of the Scotch Peers Elections I ſometimes raiſed a few ſparks of political light; and I promoted the inſtitution of literary ſocieties, literary clubs, and book-aſſociations, for the ſpread of uſeful knowledge and the colliſion of political, as well as moral ſentiment, in which I was more ſucceſsful than I expected.

When the truly eſtimable Sir Geore Savile came forward in England to unite the upper ranks of men to ſatisfy the lower in their juſt demands, I co-operated with that good man in Scotland; and I was choſen a delegate from my diſtrict, to meet for the diſcuſſion of an equitable Reform in Parliament, and in ſome communications, with which you are acquainted, I endeavoured

deavoured to ſhow at once the difficulties that were to be encountered in obtaining that great object, and my zeal for its ſucceſs. It would be ſuperfluous to recount the various circumſtances that divided, and even broke the phalanx of the Friends of the Country at that important criſis, which you yourſelf have ſo clearly exhibited in the tiſſue of procedure and of correſpondence relative to that abortive attempt to gain the general ſenſe of the Nation, and to impreſs the Oligarchy, on the one hand, with the neceſſity of yielding to that general ſenſe, and the family of Hanover, on the other, that without due and ſpeedy attention to it, the Throne and the Altar might be ſhaken or ſubverted.

It is well known to many to whom I opened my mind in converſation at that time, that with a Pythonic preſage, founded on a political view of France and of Europe, I foretold the formation of a Repreſentative Government and a Commonwealth in France, and that the Monarchy of Britain could only be ſaved by meeting completely the exigency of public and pervaſive opinion in a radical Reform of Parliament. But finding men whom I reſpected unwilling even to hear me on a ſubject ſo revolting from their feelings and prejudices, I entered into a profound retirement from the Public, and deplored in ſecret the infatuation which I felt myſelf unable to remove.

In the ſtruggle for office, and the coalition of parties that took place in the year 1783 to obtain it, I ſaw nothing that offered to my mind any hope, or at leaſt any well-founded

expectation

expectation of removing the great political evil that endangered the peace and welfare of the Country; and though my brothers were drawn from their ſituations into the whirlpool of Party, I could not perceive any firm ground for me to ſet my foot on, to mount into the public view of my Fellow-Citizens, and aſpire to a political ſituation ſuited to my principles.

I ſaw likewiſe, with concern, the confidence of the People about to be totally deſtroyed in the continued jumble of Parliamentary and Political Arrangement: and I ſaw no man ſince the death of the virtuous Sir George Savile that could reſtore it.

When the total failure of the French finances and the conſequent Revolution took place, I thought it incumbent upon me to avow my political ſentiments; and I did avow them through the medium of a ſketch of the political life of my Countryman, Andrew Fletcher, of Salton, which went to the preſs on the 14th day of July, 1791.

When the Court had formed its reſolution to entrench itſelf behind the exploded principles of the old Engliſh Monarchy, and to caſt the dye for its renewal in the deſtruction of the French Republic, or for a Republic in Britain, I ſaw with much ſatisfaction a Society formed for minutely examining the Fortreſs of Corruption in the Oligarchy of Britain, poſſeſſed of a dead majority in the Houſe of Commons; but I could not ſee from the poſture of affairs, or the extent of the remedies they held out for the cure of the great National Diſeaſe, that though my name had been enrolled

rolled among the firſt of the Members, by my eminent and highly reſpected brother Thomas, that I could with propriety co-operate with them to effectuate what I conceived to be an inadequate change of ſyſtem; and I withdrew my name, aſſigning the reaſon I have thus ſtated. But having gone ſo far to evolve the opinion I held of Public Affairs, I thought it neceſſary to convey to Mr. Charles Grey what I thought was the courſe proper to be taken by the Friends of a Free Repreſentative Government in Britain, and explicitly declared that if the diſcuſſion of the Report and Petition of the Friends of the People was not referred to a Committee of the Houſe of Commons, a complete Seceſſion from Parliament, and a remonſtrance ſubmitted to the view of the Public at large, ought to follow immediately, as the beſt mode of exhibiting to the Throne and to the Oligarchy the danger of the criſis. Unfortunately my advice was not taken; the ſpeculated meaſure came to be known both in and out of Parliament, and great ſtrength was added thereby to the infatuation of the Junto, and great danger to the State, from the raſhneſs it promoted in the miſguided councils of a deſperate Adminiſtration.

Since that fatal moment I have continued ſilent and inactive, looking forward with inexpreſſible anxiety to the total failure of the political fabric, which by one bold and manly operation in Parliament, might, in all probability, have been averted.

Innone of the Petitions for Peace and a

Change of Miniſters have I moved; nor in any reſpect have I deviated from the awful abſtinence I have preſcribed to myſelf, becauſe, without going to the root of the miſchief, I conceive every arrangement to be adding freſh fuel to the flame that is ſecretly ſpreading under our footſteps, and which, if it is not completely quenched, muſt break out hereafter with unconquerable force.

The concluſion of my whole ſentiment is this: If the Oligarchy is too ſtrongly impreſſed with the belief that in alliance with the Crown it can continue to govern the Country as it has done heretofore, we muſt have a Civil War, ending either in an abſolute Military Monarchy, like that of Auguſtus, with the interpoſition of a venal Senate; or we muſt have a fac ſimile of the French Republic.

If, on the other hand, the Oligarchy and the Family of Hanover are impreſſed with a ſenſe of danger to the Monarchy itſelf, from the doubt that may have gained acceſs from the founding of the Navy and Army, the grand ſtroke of policy to preſerve the Monarchy in union with a Popular Government would be for them to yield to a complete Reform of the Houſe of Commons, as it is now propoſed. There will I hold;—but ſhadows, clouds, and darkneſs reſt upon my thoughts *. I am,

Rev. Sir,

With great eſteem,

Your ſincere well-wiſher,

and obliged, humble ſervant,

BUCHAN.

* From the date of the preceding letter there was a pauſe in the Editor's Correſpondence with the Earl of Buchan, till his Lordſhip honoured him with this very intereſting letter.

P. S. Should you favour me with an acknowledgment of the receipt of this letter, addreſs as formerly to Dryburgh-Abbey, Kelſo.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

HARTLEPOOL, *June 16th*, 1797.

My Lord,

I Have to acknowledge the honour of your Lordſhip's letter from Kirkhill, which I received under two covers from your truly honourable brother Thomas, juſt before I ſat out from Burton for this place, with my numerous family.

On the conſequential contents of it I ſhall meditate much before I can think it right to return my anſwer; the momentous ſituation of our Country, and the high reſpect in which I hold your Lordſhip's character, alike forbid a haſty and unweighed reply.

I have the pleaſure to inform your Lordſhip that Yorkſhire, long ſunk in ſtupid confidence in the Miniſter, is about to ſhake off her political lethargy, and will act I hope with vigour in ſupport of our Rights. A ſecond Previous Meeting is to be held about the end of July at York, at which, if Peace be not concluded, or certain to be ſo very ſoon, a Reſolution to call the County together will be adopted. The ſubſtance of the Reſolutions on the other half ſheet was accepted by the

firſt Previous Meeting on the 6th inſtant, except what relates to Ireland.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
With high reſpect,
Your moſt faithful,
humble ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

HARTLEPOOL, *near* STOCKTON,
June 27th, 1797.

My Lord,

FROM our former correſpondence and your Lordſhip's Publications, I had already formed a high opinion of your vigour and public ſpirit, and learned, in ſome meaſure, to account for that inactivity during the laſt twenty years, which ſeems not to belong to your character. Your valuable letter of the 29th of May laſt has explained completely, and with much advantage to your political ſagacity, whatever difficulty a ſtranger to your way of thinking would find to reconcile your long retirement from Public Buſineſs in theſe eventful times, with your known zeal in the Cauſe of Liberty. I fear your apprehenſions of great approaching calamity in Britain are too well founded; I wiſh any plan could be laid down for the conduct of the true Friends of their Country which would afford an equally

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ſolid ground for hoping that their efforts may at once preſerve the Peace and the Liberty of the Nation. But I will own to you, my Lord, I think ſuch efforts are not likely to be ſucceſsful. I have ſome knowledge of the Miniſter's character; with the profligate corruption of North, he unites the daring ſpirit of a Strafford; and I fear he will riſk as much as Strafford did to retain his power. The character of the upper claſſes of the Nation too is degraded in theſe times by the prevalence of a mean mercenary ſpirit, little felt in Charles's days, when ſtock-jobbing was unknown, when the Crown had little to give, and the independent Gentry had nothing to aſk. On the other hand, it is true the middle claſſes, who form the Body of the Nation, are more enlightened now, and their intereſts are defended by a Band of Patriots equal in vigour and fortitude to the Pyms and Hampdens, and propably ſuperior in talents, in experience, and in philoſophical ſkill in the ſcience of Government. But from this ſhort ſtatement of the character of the contending Parties and their reſpective Leaders, what can be expected but a conflict of the moſt tremendous kind? However, while there is a chance that conciliation may be liſtened to, I think the means of conciliation ſhould not be thrown aſide. I do approve the plan lately offered to Parliament by Mr. Grey for effecting a Reformation in the frame of the Houſe of Commons; and if it reſted with me to give legiſlative effect to it, or to reject it, I certainly ſhould confirm it in all the outlines

ſketched out by Mr. Grey. But I fear we are not yet prepared, out of London and a few other Great Towns, to go that length. I am well aſſured that is the caſe, at leaſt, in Yorkſhire. I ſhould be ſorry, therefore, if the Leaders of Reform in London ſhould take any ſtep *at preſent*, which, by pledging them to accept nothing ſhort of Mr. Grey's plan in its full extent, would deprive them of all hope to effect by compromiſe ſuch a Political Reformation, as though it might fall far ſhort of theoretical perfection, might yet in practice prove adequate to the ſecurity of Public Freedom; and what I conſider as not much leſs valuable, would enable the Nation gradually and pacifically, through Parliament itſelf, to carry the ſyſtem of our Conſtitution to its ultimate perfection *.

It has been my lot, more than once, to propoſe, with a view to gradual amendment, meaſures of Reform which I was aware were liable to the objection of being imperfect Reforms, and ſuch as would not be final and ſatisfactory. I may have erred in this; but I do not perceive my error; on the contrary, as Revolution ſeems more nearly to approach us, I am more anxious that the idea of gradual Reform ſhould not be abandoned by thoſe who can give it due effect. With that view I have lately written to your excellent brother Tho-

* This was, and this remains the object of the Editor's wiſhes and purſuit. By gradual and pacific Reform he ſtill hopes that every thing may be gained for the Community which can enable it to attain the higheſt felicity, without thoſe hazards to which bolder meaſures in purſuit of theoretical refinements would be too likely to expoſe the Nation.

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mas; and I take the liberty to incloſe my letter * to him in this and another cover, for your Lordſhip's inſpection. I wiſh you may approve what I have there ventured to ſuggeſt; I mean the general purpoſe of my letter, not the particular meaſures of Reform which I have mentioned as proper terms for a compromiſe; for on that head I am ſenſible there will be much diverſity of ſentiment. But if ſuch a Reform, or ſomewhat ſtill more efficacious could be obtained in the way of compromiſe, and were to be carried into effect by Mr. Fox, the Duke of Bedford, Mr. Grey, and Mr. Erſkine, in the official ſtations in which I wiſh to ſee them, I truſt all would be well done, and would be found ſatisfactory to the Body of the Nation. In that caſe we might be juſtly thankful; indeed we could not be too deeply grateful to Providence for the eſcape at once from Military Deſpotiſm and a Civil War.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,
With the higheſt reſpect,
Your much obliged,
and faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

* The Editor was extremely deſirous that his Correſpondence with the Hon. Thomas Erſkine ſhould appear in this Volume. But from reaſons of delicacy which it is needleſs at preſent to explain, he forbears to inſert in it even his own ſhare of that Correſpondence. But at ſome future time thoſe reaſons may ceaſe to forbid the publication of the whole Correſpondence. All the letters received by the Editor from Mr. Erſkine were conſidered to be valuable; and of all, either the originals, or exact copies of them, have been preſerved with care adequate to their value.

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

HARTLEPOOL, *July 4th*, 1797.

My Lord,

ON reading afreſh Mr. Grey's Speech on Reform, in a different report from that which I had ſeen when I troubled your Lordſhip and your Brother with my ſentiments, I have the mortification to find I ſtand much in need of your candour and indulgence. I perceive I have offered thoſe ſentiments to men whom I ſo highly reſpect, with a very great miſunderſtanding of the plan to which they related, and I haſten to apologize for it.

The fact was this: I had not here any copy of Mr. Grey's Speech; I was obliged therefore either to poſtpone writing, or to riſque writing on a recollection of it that might be very erroneous. I preferred doing the latter, becauſe I wiſhed to ſtate my reaſons for thinking it a matter of great importance to the Public, and alſo to the principal Friends of Reform, that they ſhould not be pledged at preſent to accept neither more nor leſs than the Reform in every particular circumſtance propoſed by Mr. Grey. What weight thoſe reaſons deſerve to have allowed them, you and Mr. Erſkine will have determined already. On my part, I have the pleaſure to feel that I have conſcientiouſly done my duty by ſtating them, and alſo to be perfectly aſſured that my conduct will receive from him and from your

your Lordſhip the moſt candid and equitable conſtruction. Though mortified at finding the miſtake I have committed, yet, in a public view, I have an abundant compenſation in the pleaſure it gives me to find Mr. Grey's propoſal is in fact free from thoſe objections to which I apprehended it was liable. I could have wiſhed it had been extended to Scotland; yet it is ſuch as, in its preſent extent, I think, with your Lordſhip, would be an effectual ſecurity to Public Liberty. However, in my mind, the reaſons for not pledging yourſelves to the exact outline of Mr. Grey, have even more force than if that outline had taken Scotland in. If the Right of Suffrage can be obtained by compromiſe for the Copyholders, certain Leaſeholders, and the Taxed Houſeholders of England alone, I conceive the Conſtituent Body, thus augmented, in any way in which they can be called to exerciſe their Rights, or under any modification of Mr. Grey's plan, which is not too abſurd to be ſuppoſed, will be able to ſupport Public Freedom. Or if no ſuch compromiſe can be obtained, and the Nation muſt be more thoroughly rouzed to the aſſertion of its Rights in order to obtain juſtice from the Legiſlature, *then* it will be highly advantageous that the Leaders of Reform have not precluded themſelves, by any prior pledge, from calling in the aſſiſtance of the Copyholders, Leaſeholders, and Taxed Houſeholders of Scotland. In either of theſe caſes, their freedom from any premature engagement ſeems to me to be of the utmoſt conſequence

quence to the Public Cauſe. And in conformity with this view of the ſubject, it appears adviſable that the propoſitions to be offered to the Popular Meetings throughout the Kingdom ſhould be drawn up, and, if poſſible, adopted in the very ſame words by all: viz. 1ſt, approving the extenſion of the Right of Voting to Copyholders, certain Leaſeholders, and the Taxed Houſeholders in England; 2d, approving a ſimilar extenſion of the Right of Suffrage in Scotland, when it ſhall appear to be the general wiſh of the People of Scotland; 3d, declaring the Boroughs, in their preſent ſtate, to be a national grievance which requires redreſs; 4th, and agreeing to a ſuitable Petition to the Legiſlature.

I think the Popular Meetings will readily adopt theſe propoſitions next winter, if *Peace* ſhould not be concluded; even if it ſhould be concluded, the ſatisfaction of the Public will be of a ſhort duration; and the increaſing burthen of Taxation, it may be hoped will convince the Nation that, without ſuch radical Reform of Parliament, neither Liberty nor Property can be ſafe.

I requeſt you, my Lord, to accept the apologies and acknowledgments of

Your faithful
and much obliged ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

P. S. When I ſpeak of the aſſertion of National Rights, it is by pacific and rational means alone I wiſh them to be aſſerted; and when I praiſe Mr. Grey's plan, as effectual to ſupport Public Liberty, under any ſuppoſable

ſable modification, I wiſh to be underſtood to include Triennial Parliaments with the propoſed Reform of the Repreſentation. I am happy to find it is alſo the wiſh of Mr. Grey to connect theſe meaſures.

LETTER VII.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

KIRRHILL, *February 16th*, 1798.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I Have duly received both your very intereſting communications *, relative to the Meeting of the 7th at York, and do aſſure you very cordially that I highly approve of the prudence with which it was conducted, correſpondent to the ſentiments and to the advice which I preſumed to offer formerly on the ſame ſubject. The opinion of the Devil in the management of Job ſeems to be very applicable to our Countrymen; and I very much doubt whether they will ever wince till they are galled to the quick.

The character of Engliſhmen does not ſeem to have changed ſince the age of Tacitus, to whom I refer for their patience under oppreſſion when gradually inflicted, and under their ancient Forms of Government, or according to their ancient cuſtoms.

Notwithſtanding this remark, I believe the time is not diſtant when the upper ranks,

* A copy of the letter here alluded to has not been preſerved. It probably related to the Meeting at York on the 7th of February, 1798, and was accompanied by a copy of the Addreſs agreed to by that Meeting, for which ſee the 22d Preliminay Paper in the 5th Volume of Political Papers.

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fearing the eſtabliſhment of a complete Deſpotiſm, and feeling the loſs of their accuſtomed enjoyments, may be diſpoſed to coaleſce with the lower, and preſs upon the Oligarchy; but this, in the end, may nevertheleſs tend to a Revolution ſimilar rather to thoſe in Denmark and Sweden, than to thoſe of recent example on the Continent. I greatly fear that the glaſs of Reform was run out in the time of the virtuous Sir George Savile, and that the People will acquieſce ſupinely in the total loſs of Political Liberty. Indeed how can it be expected that the Commons Houſe of Parliament, in the poſſeſſion of a centumvirate, will ever incline to reform itſelf from within, to the total annihilation of its influence and power? I have ſet down in a declaration, a copy of which I ſhall tranſmit to you, the only advice and opinion I have to offer on the poſſible means of removing this dilemma, and of ſaving the limited Monarchy of England, if it could be rendered practicable by the People, and palatable to the Crown.

This opinion and advice in no wiſe ſupercedes the Reſolutions of the County of York, if, indeed, a Majority of the Freeholders could be nduced to move for a change of councils at the preſent criſis. But I greatly fear that the Miniſter, and the Oligarchy whom he repreſents, have paſſed the Rubicon, and will not recede. I am,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

With much regard,

Your obliged humble ſervant,

BUCHAN.

P. S. You

P. S. You will do me a kindneſs in recommending to the attention of your friends at York and Leeds, or both, a young relation of mine, Captain Erſkine, of the 31ſt Regiment of Foot, quartered at one of thoſe places, a young man of amiable manners, in whom I take a very particular concern.

N. B. My addreſs, till the 1ſt of April, will be at Edinburgh.

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, 13*th Feb.* 1798.
near BEDALE, *Yorkſhire.*

My Lord,

I AM happy to find that your Lordſhip approves the conduct of the Meeting at York on the 7th inſtant. The times are fraught with difficulties and danger; and as the increaſing danger of the Public calls more and more loudly for popular interpoſition, new and unexpected circumſtances occur, preſenting greater and more embarraſſing impediments to our attempt. Yet in Yorkſhire I think we have gained ſtrength from the two Meetings in this and the preceding month; we have gained credit *without* from the moderation of our proceedings, and *within* the Body we have increaſed our ſtrength by our appointment of a permanent Committee, and the gradual attainment of mutual confidence and unanimity. To the preſent difficulties, ariſing from the alarm of Invaſion, and the conſequent ſucceſs of the ſubſcriptions propoſed

poſed by the Miniſter and his friends, we muſt yield for a time. But the diſtreſs of the the Country is real, and rapidly increaſes; after having paid their fooliſh ſubſcriptions *,

* In a Country like Britain, rich in reſources, and chearfully paying taxes to an immenſe amount, it ought to be an admitted maxim that the expences of Government, in all ordinary caſes, ſhould be defrayed by the regular mode of Legiſlative Taxation. Extraordinary means of ſupply by Subſcriptions, &c. never ſhould be reſorted to, but on emergencies of extraordinary peril; and in ſuch extreme caſes, no doubt, the zeal of a free and high-ſpirited Nation would uſually want no excitement from its Rulers.

When the Directory of France threw out the menace alluded to, no criſis of extreme danger appeared to exiſt. The Fleets of France and her Allies were too much weakened to encounter the ſuperior maritime force of Britain. If ſome poſſible contingence of winds, and fogs, and tides might enable the enemy to evade our ſquadrons, and to effect an invaſion, a numerous Militia and Volunteer Force, added to a large and well-diſciplined army were prepared to defend the Country, and to maintain its independence. The menace of thoſe raſh men, the Directors of France, was not to be deſpiſed indeed; but neither was it greatly to be feared. In fact, the Nation did not feel much alarm; the Miniſters appeared to magnify the danger; they were thought to poſſeſs means amply ſufficient for the occaſion; and their ſuggeſtions failed to obtain voluntary contributions to any conſiderable extent, ſave only from their Dependents.

But when the ſecond War with France broke out, and the threat of the Directors was renewed by Bonaparte, the circumſtances were materially different, and the danger then was too probable and too formidable not to call for the utmoſt aſſiſtance which every individual could afford to our Government. During the Peace the Fleets of France and her Allies had been diligently augmented, and the military force of Britain had been greatly diminiſhed. In France the powers of Government which had been lately wreſted from the feeble hands of the Directors, were ſwayed by a man conſummate as a General and a Stateſman: In Bonaparte, Europe curſed the daring Uſurper who had trampled alike on the claims of Monarchy and the Rights of the French People; but ſhe trembled at his power. When invaſion was menaced by ſuch a foe, no art, no ſuggeſtion of Miniſters was neceſſary to rouze the patriotiſm of the Nation; men of every claſs and deſcription felt alike, that uncommon peril hung over the Country; extraordinary aids were then really wanted to repel the moſt ſucceſsful Conqueror of modern times; and they were freely and almoſt univerſally given.

On this juſt occaſion the Editor was not backward to contribute his aſſiſtance.

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the deluded People will find quintuple taxes come on to be paid; and the huzzas of ſubſcribing Loan Mongers, Contractors, and illicit Traders will be drowned in the univerſal cry of a ſuffering Nation. That will be the favourable moment for a general movement of the Friends of Peace and moderate Reform; and I do hope with your Lordſhip, that a great and powerful Body of the Nobles will then join that middle party of men who are equally determined to oppoſe the deſpotiſm of the Monarch, and the licentiouſneſs of the Populace. Without ſuch a coalition, all will be inevitably loſt; but, with it, I ſtill flatter myſelf, in the language of our Addreſs, that all may yet be well. However, I muſt acknowledge I am daily leſs ſangnine in this hope, becauſe the immenſity of our expenditure renders it continually more and more difficult to avoid a Revolution.

I am extremely glad to hear your Lordſhip has drawn up a declaration on this ſubject; and much covet to ſee it, when you have the goodneſs to tranſmit it. I rather ſuſpect the delay to tranſmit it may be occaſioned by your deſign to offer it to a Meeting of the Friends of Liberty at Edinburgh, that it may come forth as the act of the Collected Body. I wiſh my conjecture may prove true. I am,

My Lord,
With moſt cordial regard,
Your obliged and faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

Paper

Paper I.

The POLITICAL TESTAMENT *of the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

I David Stewart Erſkine, Earl of Buchan, conſidering the advanced period of my age, and that I cannot have very many years to live, and certainly not many in the full and energetic poſſeſſion of my moſt perfect intellectual faculties; and ſeeing that my virtuous poverty, long ſuſtained in the midſt of corruption and faction, has denied me the power of aiding my Country or my friends by the outward ſigns of opulence, I have determined in this form and manner, and at the preſent juncture of Public Affairs, to give and bequeath to my Countrymen my political ſentiments, which, if adminiſtered to, may yet probably ſave the Country from internal War, and the preſent Form of Government from total overthrow.

It ſeems to me to be undeniable that the two important points to be attained for the ſafety of the Government, and the peace and proſperity of the whole Community, are the knowledge of the real ſenſe of the People who conſtitute the aggregate of the Commonwealth, and the capacity of obtaining full and ample reſources for holding faith with the public creditors, and providing for the exigencies of the State.

Whether theſe two points, therefore, can be attained as the Forms of Legiſlation and Government are now ſituated, is the grand queſtion;

queſtion; the ſolution of which is to determine the endurance of the preſent order of things in the Britiſh Empire, and the ſubſiſtence of the preſent Government.

Conſidering, therefore, the removal of this political dilemma as the greateſt benefit that could be conferred upon my Country, and the mode of accompliſhing it without danger to the Community as the greateſt bleſſing to all its Citizens, the legacy I have to offer is the opinion I have formed on this ſubject, which in very few words I am about to impart.

With reſpect to the firſt point of the dilemma, and without going over ground that has been ſo amply ſurveyed, with reſpect to the partial Repreſentation of the People in the Houſe of Commons, it ought to have been evident to every man of common ſenſe, that a Community under the influence of a certain number of families or individuals, receiving great power and benefit from ſuch influence, will never be guilty of felo de ſe, and reform itſelf.

It ought to be equally evident, that the King is nearly as much cramped and impoveriſhed by this influence as the People, and that the Houſe of Peers, ſo far as it is merely a Houſe, and not a conſiſtory of perſons poſſeſſing the power of creating a Majority of the Houſe of Commons, is ſubject to the ſame inconvenience and inſignificancy. The queſtion therefore ariſes, whether it be not in the power of the King, if moved by a Majority of the Freeholders in the Counties, and of the Houſeholders in Boroughs, qualified

by Freehold, whether the Borough be held by Corporation Rights, or by Burgage Tenure, to call a Parliament by ſuch poll Election, pro tempore, to meet the extraordinary exigencies of the State, and to regulate the future Elections of Repreſentatives?

With reſpect to the ſecond point of the dilemma, it would be completely ſolved by the determination of the queſtion reſpecting the firſt, becauſe no doubt can be entertained that if ſuch a Parliament was conſtitnted, the utmoſt Reforms of the Country and Nation might be obtained without murmur or riſque of tumult, and in ſuch a manner as to render many of the exiſting taxes much more productive.

A new and juſt valuation of Property might be effected, and the public creditors receiving Rights of Suffrage correſpondent to the amount of their ſtock in the Counties and Communities where they might be domeſticated, and the produce of what may be their contribution on their dividends to the State, being faithfully and perpetually applied to the diminution of the Public Debt, in the hands of the Parliamentary Commiſſioners, there can be no doubt entertained of their ſubmitting chearfully to the exigencies of the State, by a ſmall tax on the dividends of ſtock.

It may be ſaid that the King, even by and with the advice of his Council, and moved by a Majority of the Electors of the Houſe of Commons, could not ſafely iſſue writs for the Election of ſuch a Houſe of Commons as I propoſe. But conſidering the dangerous dilemma to which the Country is reduced, and the

the firſt principles of all Communities and Nations, I hereby declare myſelf to be of a contrary opinion.

BUCHAN.

Written and ſubſcribed by me at Kirkhill, in Weſt-Lothian, February the twentieth, 1798, and put into the hands of the Rev. C. Wyvill, Ancient Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the County of York, whom and his Succeſſors I nominate my Adminiſtrators in my laſt Political Will and Teſtament above written.

BUCHAN.

KIRKHILL, *as aforeſaid.*

LETTER IX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *March 7th*, 1798.

My Lord,

I Return you many thanks for the communication of the Paper, dated Feb. the 20th, and containing your thoughts on the means of National Safety in the preſent criſis. I feel myſelf much honoured by the confidence your Lordſhip has repoſed in me; and I will venture to add that I am not unworthy of it, if the reſolution to live and die a Friend to Liberty is, in the eyes of the true Patriot, any recommendation to his eſteem.

With reſpect to the bold and deciſive meaſure propoſed in it, I think, my Lord, you have a right to know my opinion without diſ-

guiſe or reſerve; and therefore you ſhall have it. I think then, it is poſſible that the obſtinacy of the Oligarchy may render ſome ſuch meaſure neceſſary; but that no neceſſity for it can juſtly be ſaid to exiſt, till the ſenſe of the Nation, unequivocally expreſſed to Parliament, has failed to produce the deſired Reform. We, Reformers, cannot truly affirm we have ever obtained the concurrence of the major part of the Conſtituent Body, not even in the year 1780. *If* * ſuch concurrence *were obtained*, I own I ſtill cannot think it unreaſonable to expect that even the preſent Parliament would comply *with our requeſt*; not perhaps that it would in that caſe grant as much as very juſtly might be demanded, but that it would conſent, with ſome modifications, to all that Mr. Grey and Mr. Fox have propoſed. To me therefore it ſeems to be the great impediment to our ſucceſs, that we have not the voice of the Nation in our favour. Till it is clearly and loudly heard demanding Reform, the Oligarchy will liſten, I fear, to no terms; but when that univerſal cry ſhall be raiſed to the Throne, who can hope, with any ſanguine aſſurance, that the financial difficulties of the Country will not be too great to admit of relief in the uſual way of the Conſtitution? I wiſh for Popular Meetings to be held ſoon, becauſe I wiſh to prevent the riſques of deviating into any irregular meaſures; and therefore I propoſed to Mr. Grey ſome months ago

* In this part of this letter a verbal correction has been admitted, which ſeemed neceſſary to make the paſſage clear. The words altered or added are printed in *Italics*.

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the Reſolutions which your Lordſhip has ſeen in a copy of my Correſpondence with your excellent Brother Thomas; by Mr. Grey they were approved, as holding open to the Oligarchy the door of compromiſe, yet retaining the great eſſentials of his plan; they were tranſmitted by him to Mr. Fox, and I underſtand, but not directly from Mr. Fox himſelf, that they had his approbation alſo. If a change of Miniſters were effected by the interference of the People, and at the ſame time Reform were generally preſſed for at County Meetings, &c. the proſpect of ſucceſs would be a good one, I think, if it did not open too late to prevent the effects of deſperation from our extreme diſtreſs. Should that criſis unfortunately take place, the meaſure which your Lordſhip ſuggeſts may deſerve the moſt ſerious conſideration. But ſurely I may ſay, "Cuncta prius tentanda."

To be juſtifiable in departing from the accuſtomed rules of Law and the Conſtitution, we muſt be able to ſhow that there is an actual exiſting neceſſity for it; that the Nation has tried every regular meaſure, and been defeated in all. I hope and wiſh moſt anxiouſly that this never may be our ſituation, for a deſperate one it certainly will be. We cannot deviate into irregular meaſures without the greateſt danger of a Revolution. To avoid that terrible evil, and to ſupport Public Liberty, we in Yorkſhire, have declared for legal means, and *for thoſe means only*. I truſt your Lordſhip will join us in the wiſh that thoſe means may ſucceed, and that the advice you have be-

queathed us, may thus become a *lapſed legacy*. I am ever,

My Lord,
Your obliged and
moſt faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER X.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Sir,

I Have repeatedly weighed the objections ſtated in your letter, but am convinced that if it be now poſſible to ſave the Monarchy in Britain, it can only be ſaved by the means I have adviſed. Conſidering that as Earl of Buchan I am an Univerſity an dConſtituent Part of this Kingdom; that I am alſo lawfully deſcended from the Royal Families of both Kingdoms; and in the Parliamentary Succeſſion to the Throne I think myſelf entitled to declare my opinion at this criſis, ſo that if in the end the Monarchy ſhall be ſubverted, and yield to a Republican Order of Government, in ſympathy with ſurrounding Nations it ſhall not be ſaid that I was untrue to the order of things under which I was born and educated, but rather that it fell through the neglect of my counſel, and through the blindneſs of thoſe who will be infallibly buried in its ruins.

My principles, as my conduct, have ever been fair, manly, and open; publiſhed alſo to the Country in the beginning of the fatal

contest

conteſt on the 16th of April, 1791, the very day of the eventful proclamation; and ſince, as formerly, I have ever abſtained from every word and action that could in the leaſt tend to diſturb the Peace of my Country.

It is therefore for the Gentlemen of the County of York, and of the Country at large, to conſider how they are to comport themſelves, and for me alſo, when imperious neceſſity ſhall force me to break ſilence, and to act in conformity to my duty in the day of trial.

I deſire you, worthy Sir, to reſt aſſured of my regard, and am convinced that the time is not diſtant when you and all who wiſh well to the Country and to humanity, will regret *that feebleneſs of reſolve* which prevents the State from being aware of its danger until it is too late to be obviated. I am,

Rev. Sir,

With much conſideration,

Your obliged humble ſervant,

BUCHAN.

KIRKHILL, *March 23d*, 1798.

P. S. I go to Dryburgh Abbey, by Kelſo, in the courſe of ten or twelve days; but if the Gentlemen of your Committee ſhall hereafter think that I can be in any wiſe uſeful to their deliberations, I ſhall be willing to conſult with them in ſuch manner as they ſhall think proper.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, MELROSE, *May 12th*, 1798.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

TO uſe the phraſeology of a farmer, having put in my ſpring corn at Kirkhill, I removed to this reſidence in the beginning of laſt month, and propoſe remaining here till I have hoed and ridged up my carrot, and turnip, and cabbage land, in the management of all which, as well as in my other agricultural and horticultural operations, I am finically exact. In the beginning of July I ſhall return to Kirkhill by Edinburgh; and at all times, and in all places, I ſhall wiſh to communicate with you, whom I have ſo long and ſo juſtly eſteemed.

Identity of character, and conſiſtency of ſentiment and conduct, are the claims I have upon the Public, and upon my old acquaintance; and I know that I belong to a very ſmall groupe, little attended to in the preſent ſtate of Great-Britain; yet if at any time it could be any conſolation to thoſe of my way of thinking to confer with me, I ſhould be prompt to afford them the wretched remains of political advice that the folly and wickedneſs of Public Men have left to be adopted.

Mr. Charles Grey, to whom, as I formerly mentioned, I communicated my plan of operations for the recovery of our affairs in the year 1793, ſeems to be the only man of conſequence

ſequence, that, though too late, has adopted my advice.

If he, or any others who agree in general with me, ſhould wiſh to know explicitly and fully my thoughts upon the exigencies of the Country in free conference, I ſhall, however inconvenient to my continual active habits of life in this Country, be ready to meet with them either at the Duke of Northumberland's, at Alnwick, at Mr. Curwen's, at Belle Iſle, in Windermere Lake, or at York. If a ſtill more domeſtic and retired conference is thought preferable, and that you bring any of thoſe in whoſe wiſdom, prudence, and virtue you have moſt confidence, to Burton-Hall for a day, to meet me, I will Nicodemus it there when it ſhall be thought moſt ſuitable. You are in poſſeſſion of my ultimate thoughts on what regards the ſtate of the Country; and you will beſt be able to judge whether any good would be likely to ariſe from ſuch a viſit.

I have no family, and I am a Philoſopher; yet the proſpect of compleat and pervaſive ſlavery to my unhappy Country moves me, once for all, to acquit myſelf of that duty which every man owes to thoſe who were once his Fellow-Citizens, and are now his Companions in bondage and diſgrace.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,
With ſincere eſteem,
Your obedient humble ſervant,
BUCHAN.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *May 18th*, 1798.

My Lord,

AFTER a literary correſpondence with you for many years, in the courſe of which I have been honoured by ſome very confidential communications, I embrace, with pleaſure, the offer of a meeting and perſonal acquaintance, which your Lordſhip has made me in your obliging letter of the 12th of this month. To Mr. Curwen I am a perfect ſtranger, and not ſufficiently acquainted with the Duke of Northumberland to meet your Lordſhip at Alnwick Caſtle, unleſs invited by his Grace. To meet at York, would add to your journey forty miles, and yet be leſs pleaſant to us both. I ſhall hope therefore to have the pleaſure of receiving you at Burton-Hall; and if your excellent Brother Thomas ſhould intend coming into the North this ſummer, I ſhould be happy if he would ſo concert his journey as to meet your Lordſhip here. To ſome of my Yorkſhire friends, and to Dr. Fenwick of Durham, and Mr. Bigge of Northumberland, I am ſure an introduction to your Lordſhip would be a great gratification; and having a few weeks previous notice of the day when I may expect the honour of your viſit, I hope I ſhall be able to engage them. They are virtuous and able men; and from their diſintereſted

reſted zeal in the Cauſe of Liberty, they are worthy to be claſſed in that ſmall groupe of real Patriots, among whom the Earl of Buchan makes amoſt conſpicuous figure.

It was my intention, my Lord, to have explained myſelf more fully in this letter on the ſubject of your *Political Teſtament*; but I forbear, expecting ſoon the pleaſure of converſing with you. I will only now ſay, it is a ſubject which the ſtate of public affairs forces upon my daily meditation; yet, agreeing with your doctrine in ſpeculation, admitting the meaſures you have ſuggeſted to be defenſible in theory, ſtill I greatly doubt their expedience, or even their practicability, with any proſpect of a good effect.

In Yorkſhire we have cautiouſly avoided all unuſual meaſures, and every mode of oppoſition which could be thought irregular. And yet our caution has not reconciled to us the majority of our Country Gentlemen. A deviation from the accuſtomed practice would be the certain ruin of our Cauſe: at leaſt I apprehend it; and from that apprehenſion, as well as from my wiſh and firm reſolution to take no ſtep in favour of Liberty which I am not ſatisfied is right, I have pledged myſelf to the Gentlemen with whom I act in Yorkſhire to meaſures ſtrictly regular and pacific, by a variety of declarations, to which my conduct muſt be conformable. From this circumſtance it is more than poſſible that ſome of my doubts and difficulties may have ariſen, or at leaſt may derive much of their force upon my mind. I am aware that my opinion

deſerves

deſerves to be little regarded; I think, perhaps, as I mean to act, under the reſtraint of prior engagements. And I mention this, hoping to appear to your Lordſhip leſs tenacious of my opinion, than anxious to preſerve a conſiſtent character, and to unite political rectitude with that high eſteem with which I am,

My Lord,
Your obliged and faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XIII.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL

Dear Sir,

I AM much pleaſed with your Defence of the Seceſſion in Parliament; but alas! pamphlets now are only for cartridges. A great problem on the ſurface of our planet is in the courſe of ſolution, and will be ſolved in ſpite of every contrivance of human artifice. The Japaneſe and Britiſh iſles are likely to be the laſt lurking holes of the Old Monſter, but he will be finally extirpated. All this I ſaw in my youth, and reſolved to abſtain from Beans.

I am deſirous that you ſhould be made acquainted with my kinſman Bryan Lord Fairfax at York, who being particularly recommended to my friendſhip by my moſt worthy friend General Waſhington, (who is our common kinſman alſo) I am very ſolicitous that

that he ſhould enjoy the pleaſure of your acquaintance.

I am, dear Sir,
With ſincere eſteem,
Your obedient humble ſervant,
BUCHAN.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, MELROSE,
Feb. 10*th*, 1759.

P. S. I do not go to Kirkhill till the end of next month.

LETTER XIV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 27*th*, 1799.

My Lord,

YOUR kind letter of the 10th inſtant did not reach me till the 18th, having been detained on the road by the extraordinary ſeverity of the weather; and my anſwer has been delayed longer than it would have been, that I might have ſomething more to return your Lordſhip than merely my acknowledgments of the great pleaſure I have received from your approbation of "The Seceſſion Vindicated." In times like theſe, little could be done by the beſt written papers, as you very truly remark. What then can be expected from a piece of inferior merit, when, from the general intimidation of the Booksellers, it cannot be publiſhed in the uſual way, and can only be circulated very imperfectly, by the aſſiſtance of friends?

That

That is the caſe reſpecting my Vindication of the Seceſſion. Not one Bookſeller of decent character, either in Town or Country, has dared to be my Publiſher. Thus I am compelled to give up publication by ſale, and only to diſtribute this Pamphlet through private hands; in which way, however, I hope to get it circulated pretty completely in Yorkſhire, and in London, and ſprinkled in ſome other parts of England. The cowardice of the Bookſellers is the more remarkable, becauſe they were all previouſly informed that a Lawyer of eminence had been conſulted on the point of legality, and had pronounced it legal. That Lawyer was not named to them, or to any friend, but in confidence. It was no other, my Lord, than your excellent Brother Thomas, in perfect reliance on whoſe opinion I reſolved to meet the riſque, ſuch as he allowed was ſtill impending, notwithſtanding his opinion of its conformity with law. I felt all ſcruple removed by his favourable opinion on the point of law, and could not enough thank him for his kind partiality in other reſpects.

I have been lately favoured with two obliging letters from Lord Fairfax, the firſt of which informed me of his deſire, from your recommendation, to be acquainted with me; the ſecond mentioned his intention to ſtay at York till about the middle of April, before which time I hope to be able to wait upon his Lordſhip. The ſeverity of the weather and my infirmities made it impoſſible for me to do ſo immediately, which would have been my wiſh, if I had been differently circumſtanced.

ſtanced. From the neceſſary care of my health, I paſs the winter in as great privacy as Lord Fairfax repreſents himſelf to have been many years accuſtomed to. But this retirement does not leſſen my deſire to cultivate the acquaintance of good and honourable men, ſuch as I fully expect to find your Lordſhip's friend and relation, Lord Fairfax.

I will only add, that I have formed ſome hopes of one day ſeeing you both under my roof*. I am,

With moſt ſincere good wiſhes,
My Lord,
Ever faithfully your's,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XV.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, MELROSE,
May 4th, 1800.

Dear Sir,

I Have often meditated a viſit to you at Burton-Hall; and a few years ago my Brother Thomas intended to have given us the Meeting at Belle-Iſle with Mr. Curwen, of

* Soon after this time the Editor found that the hope here expreſſed was diſappointed by the return of Lord Fairfax, the neighbour and friend of Waſhington, to his home in Virginia. His Lordſhip's houſe is divided from Mount Vernon only by the river on which each of the houſes ſtands; and it was the cuſtom of theſe friends to ferry over the river to partake the dinner of his neighbour whenever the ſounding of a trumpet gave the appointed ſignal. Even this ſmall circumſtance reſpecting the illuſtrious Waſhington, will not be thought unintereſting.

which

which I then informed you; but I am ſo ſituated, though a private man, that is is very difficult for me to make excurſions from home. The great eſteem I have for your character, and the congeniality of our ſentiments, make me very deſirous of a Meeting with you. I cannot come to Burton-Hall; perhaps in the courſe of this ſummer you might think of making an excurſion to Dryburgh-Abbey, where I ſhould explain to you the reaſons for preferring this arrangement rather than the other. I am only diſtant 19 miles from Cornhill, where the Royal Charlotte ſtops at breakfaſt hour the ſecond day from York, ſo that in point of time, it is but a trip.

I wiſh you occaſionally to think of this; and if you can favour me with my wiſh, to let me know a few days before you intend to ſet out.

The ſituation of this Country, reſpecting corn and cattle, as well as other neceſſaries of life, is ſuch as greatly afflicts every reflecting individual, and is preſſing every body to the quick, who is not fattening on the profuſion of the Public; and the remoter conſequences are ſuch in proſpect as to intimidate even the maddeſt abettors of the modern ſyſtem. This poſture and theſe forebodings are I believe very general throughout the Iſland, and are ſuch as to invite the concert of every one not dead to the ſenſe of impending danger. I am,

Rev. Sir,

With ſincere eſteem,

Your obliged humble ſervant,

BUCHAN.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *May 14th*, 1800.

My Lord,

I Accept with pleaſure your obliging invitation, and will wait upon your Lordſhip in the courſe of this ſummer, either before the 10th of July, or after the 25th of Auguſt; between which days I have an annual engagement at home which a father can hardly diſpenſe with. From the ſtate of the public mind at preſent, I have little doubt but the long-ſuppreſſed ſentiments of the People will be called forth in Petitions before the end of the current year. And our meeting in the latter period I have alluded to, viz. between the 25th of Auguſt and October, may probably be of greater uſe than it could be in the earlier part of the ſummer, when it would be more difficult to form a judgment of the public opinion, and to concert a plan adapted to it. But if your Lordſhip ſhould prefer ſeeing me in June or the beginning of July, I ſhall be very happy in paying my viſit at that time. I beg, therefore, you will have the goodneſs, my Lord, to fix the time moſt agreeable to yourſelf, and moſt likely to be attended with ſome little utility to the Public Cauſe, to which we have both been ſo long devoted. Believe me to be, with moſt ſincere regard, My Lord,

Your moſt faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XVII.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, *May 19th*, 1800.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I Agree with you in thinking that towards the end of September will be the time moſt appropriate for our conference, which, if not productive of any benefit, will at leaſt afford us the ſatisfaction of once meeting on this ſide of the grave, and of expreſſing to each other, viva voce, the ſentiments that have united us for ſo many years in moral and political friendſhip, without ſocial intercourſe.

On the twelfth of June next I enter into the 59th year of my age; and my bodily ſtrength, which has never been very promiſing of long life, cannot be expected to afford me hereafter much power of exertion in the active buſineſs of ſociety.

I have never meddled with the Beans of Plato; and having ſeen in the morning of my life the caſting of the fatal dye, which has implicated all Europe, and brought upon my Country unutterable evil, I have perſiſted in chuſing a private and retired ſituation, in which, without deſerting the poſt of duty and humanity, I might keep myſelf unſpotted from the world.

Surely there is no one either of my own rank, or of any other, that can accuſe me of troubling the waters of ſociety, or of being in

in the leaſt degree officious reſpecting what did not belong to my immediate ſituation, rank, or duty; ſo that relating to every thing of a public nature, I may be conſidered as an inhabitant of another world, and undiſturbed by the influence of the preſent. If I united myſelf to the late Lord Chatham in political life, in my early days, which I could hardly be ſaid to do ſince, it was only as William Pitt, and in oppoſition to the crooked deſigns of Britain relating to the American Colonies, I did it only to manifeſt the ſame opinions which have guided me through life, and kept me in obſcurity, or in the ill-will of the Governors of my Country. If I departed from my philoſophical retreat in volunteering my political regards to the Committee of the County of York and its worthy Repreſentative, Sir George Savile, which I did with no other view than to exhibit my opinion concerning the elements of Reform, which I thought I ſaw in the Parliamentary Conſtitution of Britain, and which had been brought into action often without convulſion or danger to the State in the reigns of Charles II. William III. Anne, and the two Firſt Georges, not to mention the preſent reign, I acted only in conſiſtency with the whole of my character, which, though very private, is ſufficiently known, and has been uniform.

In correſponding with Franklin, and Otis, and Hancock, and Cuſhing, before the fatal breach with America, I did it in concert with Mr. Pitt the Elder, to obviate, if poſſible, the opening of that Box of Pandora from whence

has been ſcattered the evils that have deſolated a whole world, and covered it with blood.

In cultivating the friendſhip and confidence of Mr. Waſhington, I was not only guided by the ties of conſanguinity, and the ſentiments of a moſt perfect eſteem, but I was moved by the pleaſing hope of contributing in ſome degree to the great objects my Illuſtrious Kinſman had in view in that new and riſing ſtate; wherein I thought ſome impulſe might be given, under God, to the better condition of future ages, in reſpect of education and internal police; and it has pleaſed God that in this reſpect I ſhould not be diſappointed, as a ſhort time I believe will evince.

It is to you, Sir, and to you only, that I thus explain myſelf. I know very well that, like every honeſt man, not guided by Party, you * have been accuſed of credulity and inconſiſtency in politics; but theſe accuſations have

* What his Noble Correſpondent thought of theſe imputations may be collected from this letter, and from the whole ſeries of his letters here ſubmitted to the inſpection of the Public. Yet others may be apt to form a leſs candid judgment of the Editor's character, at leaſt reſpecting the credulity which has been imputed to him. In this reſpect, therefore, he may be allowed to offer a few brief explanatory remarks.

He admits that it was, and that it remains his belief, that Mr. Pitt was ſincere in his endeavours to effect a Reform in the Popular Repreſentation in the year 1785, and that he made the utmoſt exertions in his power to procure the aſſent of the Crown, and the great Ariſtocratical Families who ſupported his Adminiſtration, to the meaſure he propoſed for that purpoſe: but with the great majority of the Families alluded to, his efforts were unſucceſsful. For ſome time it was denied that ſuch exertions were really made; but events have gradually produced a conſiderable change of opinion in this reſpect; and the moſt incredulous, the moſt able and determined Opponents of Mr. Pitt have been convinced, by the inſpection of documents, that in the attempt to reform the Parliament he was ſincere, and in earneſt.

have not leſſened you in my eſteem. A great and unfortunate change has happened in the manners, ſentiments, and condition of the Engliſh Nation ſince our firſt acquaintance; and now, Sir, I will confeſs that I entertain great fears of the reſult.

Some years after the period when that enterpriſe was defeated, it is not improbable that Mr. Pitt, who at firſt was only leſs unacceptable at St. James's than his rival, might begin to acquire ſome degree of perſonal favour there; and in proportion to his increaſing favour and influence there, he might turn his looks from the People to the Court.

To the Editor there appeared reaſon for this ſuſpicion at the time alluded to. But from converſation, and from his unpubliſhed correſpondence with ſome of Mr. Pitt's perſonal Friends, he had obtained information reſpecting his political ſentiments which kept his mind in ſuſpenſe, and rendered it impoſſible clearly to aſcertain whether Mr. Pitt was, or was not faithful to his engagement. After the Proclamations of 1791, there could be little doubt that the Miniſter was meditating a change of ſyſtem; and the apprehenſion filled the Editor with concern and fear; with fear for the Public, and with concern for Mr. Pitt himſelf. After thoſe Proclamations, the Miniſter's adoption of the views of the Court, and the anti-reforming Party, reſpecting a War, the new Republic of France removed every doubt from the Editor's mind; and his letter to Mr. Pitt of the 9th February, 1793, was publiſhed in oppoſition to the new ſyſtem which he had then manifeſtly taken up. As one of the Agents for the moderate Reformers, he felt it incumbent upon him to beware of injuring the Cauſe of the Public by any indiſcretion, by any premature diſcovery of ſuſpicion which might alienate the man then moſt able to promote or to defeat it. But when his alienation became unqueſtionable, then, and not till then, he felt it to be his duty to engage in open hoſtility to the new Enemy of Reform. By purſuing a different courſe of conduct the Editor might have prevented the charge of credulity; but he muſt have incurred the more ſerious reproach that he had wanted patience and candour, that he had raſhly diſguſted the then moſt powerful Friend of Reform, and driven him by a precipitate declaration of diſtruſt, while he had yet not ceaſed to be true to the People to abandon them and their Cauſe.

With reſpect to the other charge of inconſiſtence, he is not aware that any explanation of his conduct hitherto is neceſſary. At his age, that event cannot be far diſtant which muſt finally ſeal his character. But ſhort as the ſpace of life may be, the ſhortneſs of it can afford no certain ſecurity againſt the guilt of tergiverſation; he muſt ſtill keep this truth before him, and watch his conduct with vigilance and circumſpection.

The ſupreme power in Britain has been now for a long time in the hands of a few men who have contrived to make a majority of the People to depend entirely on the continuance of their power and bounty; and to ſee in the return of Peace a diminution of their pre-eminence and profit, as opening the ſluices of induſtry and proſperity to the Nations at large, inſtead of being concentrated by monopoly and violence in an Univerſal Monarchy of the Sea.

If I had a vantage ground, and a voice loud enough and powerful enough in eloquence to reach the extent of the whole Britiſh Empire, I ſhould deſpair of ſhowing my Countrymen the fallacy to which they are now unfortunately expoſed; nor do I ſee any alternative but that of waiting in awful ſuſpenſe for the gradual unfolding of the fatal roll of Providence. To me it ſeems that nothing but the diſpaſſionate prudence and reflection of the upper claſs of People in Britain, and not the turbulent Petitions of the lower, can make any impreſſion on thoſe who have got the whole machine of Government in Britain into their hands, and who can weild it according to their pleaſure.

If it ſhall pleaſe God to incline thoſe who have the moſt lucrative ſtake in this Country and Nation to conſider the danger to which I allude in this letter, and to manifeſt their ſenſe of that danger to the Miniſter and his Aſſociates, not publicly, but privately, and at London, I ſhould entertain ſome hope that a ſtop might be put to the career which threatens to

bring

bring incalculable evil to poſterity. However it may be, I have laid a foundation for your more perfect knowledge of my ſentiments, ſo that if you honour me with a viſit at this place, after having imparted theſe ſentiments to thoſe whom I eſteem in your neighbourhood, you may be able to afford me an opportunity of more fully communicating my thoughts upon the general ſubject. I am,

Rev. and Dear Sir,
With ſincere reſpect and eſteem,
Your obliged and obedient
humble ſervant,
BUCHAN.

P. S. I have only to aſk that you will inform me whether this letter ſhall come ſafe to your hands, as I have retained no copy of it.

LETTER XVIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *June 3d*, 1800.

My Lord,

I Duly received your kind letter of the 19th of May. I delayed my anſwer for a few days for the ſake of an opportunity to ſhow your letter to ſome friends in whoſe judgment I confide. I am happy to aſſure your Lordſhip, that they concurred with me in highly approving the moderation and prudence of the meaſure which you are meditating. Yet, conſidering the character of the Miniſter, we cannot be ſanguine in hoping for complete ſuc-

ceſs from the private application you have thought of making to him. This, however, is far from being an objection to the meaſure. He may diſregard the warning given him; but the Nation will certainly attend to it. And it will introduce, I hope, with greater effect, thoſe general Petitions of the Counties which ſeem likely to take place next winter. For though the application were privately made, yet as a conſiderable number of perſons of diſtinction would probably join your Lordſhip in making it, I ſuppoſe it would neither be your wiſh, nor for the intereſt of the Public, to keep it ſecret; indeed it would hardly be poſſible to prevent the meaſure being known univerſally.

I ſhall look forward, my Lord, with great pleaſure to the latter part of September, when I truſt nothing will intervene to prevent my having the happineſs, after ſo many years of confidential correſpondence, to enjoy your ſociety, and concert meaſures for our more effectual co-operation in this very critical poſture of public affairis. I ſhall hope for the honour of another letter, when your Lordſhip can fix the time more exactly. I am,

With ſincereſt eſteem and regard,

My Lord,

Your's ever moſt ſincerely,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

HARTLEPOOL, *Oct. 3d*, 1800.

My Lord,

IT is ſome months ago ſince I read with great concern in the public prints the account of that misfortune which muſt have thrown your Lordſhip, your excellent brother Thomas, and all your united family, into the deepeſt affliction.* It has been often the ſubject of my thoughts, and as often the ſubject of my ſincereſt regret and ſympathiſing ſorrow. When the good and the worthy ſuffer ſo ſeverely, when they who are at once the friends and the ornaments of their ſpecies are bowed with grief, bewailing loſſes from which the profligate and the baſe, the tyrant and the traitor, are free, the mind is almoſt loſt in perplexity, the intricacies of Providence ſeem paſt finding out, and a gloomy doubt ariſes to overſhadow the proſpect of life. But when the good and worthy bear their afflictions with a fortitude inſpired by pious reverence to the Great Ruler of Events, or heightened by it, as I truſt that you, my Lord, and your Brother do, their example re-confirms our religious hope, and the proſpect again brightens up before us. Yet ſtill I fear that neither your Lordſhip nor Mr. Erſkine can have ſuf-

* The event alluded to was the death of Mrs. Erſkine, the daughter of the Hon. Thomas Erſkine, who had been not long married to Col. Erſkine, for whom Lord Buchan expreſſed ſo much affection and ſolicitude in the poſtſcript of Letter X.

ficiently

ficiently conquered your parental feelings, and recompoſed your minds under this great misfortune, to receive, with entire ſatisfaction, a mixture of company; among whom I could only claſs myſelf as a Stranger-Friend, not perſonally known to your Lordſhip, and little known to your Brother, yet filled with the higheſt eſteem and regard for both, and poſſeſſing ſome ſhare of your's, I truſt, and that not a recent acquiſition, but one which I have long enjoyed. On account of our former diſappointment, it belongs to me to ſpare your feelings, and prevent your fixing an engagement which I cannot but apprehend would be diſtreſſing to you and Mr. Erſkine. I therefore intreat you to defer our intended interview till the next ſummer, when I hope I may have the happineſs of enjoying your ſociety, and alſo your Brother's, without being under the painful apprehenſion of intruding on the ſorrows of a whole family whom I ſo highly value.

I beg you, my Lord, and your Brother, to accept my ſincereſt good wiſhes.

I am, with the greateſt truth,

Your faithful friend and ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. I ſhall return to Burton in a few days.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 8th*, 1801.

My Lord,

THE Requiſition * copied on the other ſide of this ſheet will be ſent by this day's poſt to Mr. Wrightſon; the Previous Meeting will probably be held on the 24th of Feb. the County Meeting about the 10th of March. The correſpondence which has led to this iſſue, was the moſt tedious and embarraſſing I ever was engaged in, from the great diſcouragement of our friends, who conſequently heſitated, thinking me too bold, and my propoſition premature. This difficulty has been got over; and I think I may venture to predict our ſucceſs.

I ſhall be happy to hear your Lordſhip is in good health, and that you have recovered your uſual ſpirits and ſerenity of mind.

I am,

My Lord,

With moſt cordial regard,

Your's ever faithfully,

C. WYVILL.

* For this Requiſition ſee the 9th of the Preliminary Papers in this Volume.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, *February 13th*, 1801.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I SEE the good effects of that forbearance which I took the liberty of recommending to the Friends of the Country laſt ſummer, and in which ſentiment I had the ſatisfaction of meeting your's, which has been ſo uniformly directed toward the honour and welfare of thoſe with whom you are politically connected. *A very general agreement in ſentiment ſeems to be taking place every where in relation to public affairs*; and little doubt I think is to be entertained of the iſſue being in ſome degree favourable to the wiſhes of thoſe who are ſincerely deſirous of promoting the peace and proſperity of the Kingdom.

From your great and truly reſpectable County of York, the Public will look for a pattern of firmneſs, united with moderation in all their proceedings; and I am confident we ſhall not be diſappointed. In my ſituation, ſo perfectly free from all political engagements or connections, and conſidering the whole tenor of a life dedicated to the duties of a private Country Gentleman, or to ſcientific and literary purſuit, it cannot be imagined that in wiſhing ſucceſs to the Petition of the County of York at this criſis, I can be actuated by any motive ſeparate from the good of the Community at large; and I do moſt anxiouſly hope that the Petition will be ſo guarded and framed as to acquire the approbation and ſignature of

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all the moſt opulent and eminent perſons in Yorkſhire; nor have I changed my opinion concerning the expediency of ſubſidiary means being uſed by perſons of great property and influence, in reſpect of correſpondence with his Majeſty's Miniſters, or with ſuch of them as they may be in habits of friendſhip, to repreſent, in the moſt *authentic and impreſſive manner*, the urgent neceſſity there is for a change of political meaſures.

My health, which was never very firm, has ſuffered conſiderably from the continued cold and moiſture of the winter; and beſides the uneaſineſs I have had to undergo from domeſtic ſorrows and deprivations, I am not aſhamed to acknowledge, however ludicrous it may ſeem to a modern apathiſt, that the diſtreſſes of my Country and the miſeries of Europe at large have had a conſiderable ſhare in this combination of depreſſing circumſtances. My confidence is, and has ever been in Him who out of evil brings forth good, and without whom we are to no end. I am,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Your's ſincerly,

BUCHAN.

LETTER XXII.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I HAVE conſidered your letter to Major Cartwright, and am happy to concur with you in the peaceable and virtuous ſentiments therein

therein contained; being clearly of opinion, that nothing but miſery and diſappointment could ariſe from the tumultuous proceedings of a depraved Nation of *Lazzaroni*, whoſe wretched dependent circumſtances muſt render them incapable of acting with any views, ſave thoſe of their intereſted Leaders.

I conſider your reſpectable political life as now cloſed, and cloſed with honour; and I have much ſatisfaction in reflecting upon the part I have always taken in your conduct.

That you, and many other ſenſible and worthy men, ſhould have been miſtaken in your opinion of Mr. Pitt, and other Public Men, can be imputed to no other cauſe than the honeſty of your own diſpoſitions and the natural confidence we are apt to place in the fervour of incorrupted youth. Should you find it altogether convenient or agreeable to yourſelf to makean excurſion ſo far as Tweed ſide, it would give us great pleaſure to meet there and ruminate on what is paſt; for happily there is nothing, as I think, with which, in reſpect to the Public, we have to accuſe ourſelves.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir,
With continued eſteem,
Your obliged humble ſervant,
BUCHAN.

Dryburgh-Abbey, *June* 3*d*, 1801.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *June 10th*, 1801.

My Lord,

IN the courſe of my political life I have met with many diſappointments, and many mortifications; but in no part of it with more or greater than in the laſt ſix months; yet I feel my mind ſtill unbroken and erect as ever. This I owe to the perfect ſatisfaction of a conſcience free from any juſt reproach reſpecting the Public; and in no ſmall degree alſo to the continued eſteem with which I have been encouraged and ſupported by wiſe and good men. I think with pride that I enjoy the approbation of ſuch men. And one teſtimonial of eſteem from a Patriot of Lord Buchan's unqueſtionable virtue is more than ſufficient in my mind to compenſate every mortification.

I feel this to be ſtrictly true at preſent, after the peruſal of your Lordſhip's kind letter of the 3d of June; and, in returning my ſincere acknowledgments, I wiſh I could make my expreſſions adequate to my feelings.

Conſidering my advanced age, and the ſtill continued infatuation of the Public, I think it more than probable that I may never more attend any Popular Meeting for the ſupport of Liberty. But ſhould a reverſe of fortune in this eventful War produce a change in the ſentiments of the Country, of this part of it more particularly, before all ſtrength and vigour have abſolutely left me, I ſhall think it an incumbent duty to give the beſt aſſiſtance in

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my power to younger men, who will be able and willing, I hope, to undertake the laborious taſk of managing ſuch buſineſs. But whatever part I may take in any future legal ſtruggle in defence of Conſtitutional Liberty, I truſt it will be found conſiſtent with my paſt conduct, and will continue to me the honour of your approbation.

I ſhould be very happy to accept your Lordſhip's invitation; and I hope in the courſe of this ſummer it may be in my power to viſit you at Dryburgh-Abbey. When I can fix the time nearly, I will again write; and though unfortunately diſappointed before in a ſimilar plan, I flatter myſelf I ſhall not experience diſappointment again, or have freſh reaſon to regret being deprived of an opportunity of being perſonally acquainted with your Lordſhip, after having for a ſeries of years received ſo many proofs of your eſteem and kind regard *.

I am, my Lord,

Your much obliged

and moſt faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

* In this letter, and in the three letters which immediately follow it, there is little to be found which is not rather perſonal than of a public nature. Yet, ſince theſe four letters may enable the reader more clearly to appreciate the character of the Noble Patriot, the Editor was unwilling to ſuppreſs them. In the laſt of theſe four letters, Lord Buchan's zeal to do honour to the character of Sir George Savile, his regret and diſguſt at the ruined ſtate of the Conſtitution, and his pious reſignation to the Divine Will, when expreſſing his wiſh to be transferred to another and better ſtate of exiſtence, will probably meet general approbation. Undoubtedly the enthuſiaſm of the Noble Lord in the Cauſe of Liberty is ſincere; it is the ardour of a virtuous mind, powerfully attached from principle, from habit, and even from the prejudice of his family to our happy Conſtitution; actuated by a benevolent morality, and controuled by a deep and habitual ſenſe of Religion.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

Dear Sir,

I Have had the pleaſure to receive your's of the 28th ult. mentioning the 19th inſtant as the day you expect to favour me with your long-meditated viſit.

It will afford me great ſatisfaction, and I hope you will be accompanied by any of your family or friends who may happen to find it convenient to be of the party on that occaſion.

Lady Buchan, alſo, who has ſo often heard your name honourably mentioned in my houſe with affectionate eſteem, and every where with reſpect, looks forward with ſatisfaction to your being under our roof. I am,

Rev. and Dear Sir,
With ſincere eſteem,
Your obliged, humble ſervant,
BUCHAN.

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, *July 3d*, 1801.

LETTER XXV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *Auguſt 7th*, 1801.

My Lord,

AFTER I had viſited my friends at Capheaton, Benton, and Durham, I had the pleaſure on Monday laſt to return home, and to behold my whole family re-united in perfect health.

During my abſence, buſineſs I found had grown upon me, which required immediate attention. I have quickly diſpatched it; and I now ſeize with eagerneſs an early opportunity to pay my acknowledgments and heart-felt grateful thanks for your kindneſs and Lady Buchan's; which made my ſtay at Dryburgh one of the brighteſt and happieſt portions of my life, and ſtored my mind with a fund of recollections which I ſhall long retrace with pleaſure.

During my ſtay in Northumberland, I viſited the worthy Dean of Wincheſter, at Kirkley; and though I found him deeply afflicted at the loſs of a beloved daughter, I yet found he did not leſs ſenſibly feel for the endangered Liberty of his Country; and when I named the new Biography, in which the life of his friend Sir G. Savile is to be compriſed, I found him intereſted in a high degree, that juſtice ſhould be done completely to the character of our Great Patriot. Before I left Kirkley he promiſed to collect materials for the life of Sir G. Savile from Mr. Hartley and other friends, to add more from his own ſtock, and to draw up the account himſelf. I encouraged the Dean to undertake this taſk, as a perſon perfectly well qualified to execute it with all the force and eloquence we could wiſh; and with a more intimate knowledge of Sir George, as a relation, connected in friendſhip with him for many years, than is poſſeſſed, probably, by any other of his friends: and I flatter myſelf, my Lord, that you will agree with me in thinking that this pious office

fice could not eaſily be committed to a fitter or worthier perſon.

I have juſt ſent Mr. Maclaurin ſome copies of my Political Collection, and of the Letter to Mr. Cartwright, for himſelf, Mr. Henry Erſkine, and Dr. Anderſon. They are accompanied with a very ſmall packet containing a copy of Mr. Cartwright's letter to myſelf, and two or three copies of my anſwer, which I beg your Lordſhip to accept. You will, I imagine, receive them from your Brother.

Mrs. Wyvill deſires to unite her compliments with mine, to you, my Lord, and to Lady Buchan. Mine alſo attend Miſs Erſkine, with every good wiſh to her and all the family.

I am, with the ſincereſt eſteem and affection,

My Lord,

Your's ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XXVI.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL

DRYBURGH-ABBEY, *Auguſt 15th*, 1801.

My Dear Sir,

YOUR letter of the 7th which I received yeſterday gave me great ſatisfaction, and I pray God that the worthy perſons who have it in their power to embalm the memory of the excellent Sir George Savile, may be preſerved and enabled to perform the pious and meritorious office. The reſpectable Dean of

Wincheſter and Mr. Hartley are, I dare ſay, acquainted with the worth and abilities of Dr. George Gregory, Rector of Low Layton, Eſſex, and Chaplain to the Biſhop of Landaff, who ſucceeded the Rev. Dr. Kippis in the conducting of the new edition of the Biographia, to whom, or to the Conductor of that noble work, the Dean will be pleaſed to tranſmit the manuſcript when ready for inſertion, and it may be conſidered whether it would not be right to publiſh the work ſeparately in a handſome form, with an Appendix of original correſpondence, and a Buſto of Sir George from Nollekens's model, engraved for the Frontiſpiece. From this larger work a digeſt would be prepared by Dr. Gregory for the Biographia Britannica; for it muſt be yet a conſiderable time before that work can arrive at the article of Sir George Savile, and it may be beneficial to ſociety that ſo noble an example of public and private virtue ſhould be quickly given to our country, and to ſociety at large. I ſhall be greatly pleaſed to re-peruſe the correſpondence with Major Cartwright, which, I dare ſay, Dr. Anderſon or my Brother, or Maclaurin, will forward to me. My worthy friend and ancient correſpondent, I am glad I am old, and that my conſtitution does not promiſe me long life, ſeeing that I have ſurvived what renders life cheerful and pleaſant, the order and conſtitution of things under which one has been accuſtomed to live, and the fabric of civil laws and cuſtomswhich had become habitual to me and to my family.

I am

I am now, I think, far advanced in the fifthact of my life, and *(in perfect reſignation to the Divine will)* I am deſirous to be diſſolved, and to be with God in another ſtate of exiſtence, more ſuited to my nature and ſentiment.

Lady Buchan and my Niece join in kind wiſhes to you and your family, and I remain,

My dear Sir,

With friendly affection, your's,

BUCHAN.

Extract *of* LETTER XXVII.

From the EARL *of* BUCHAN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

My Dear Sir,

YOUR intereſting converſation at Dryburgh-Abbey, and our ancient correſpondence on public matters, would have induced me to have returned that viſit when I was on an excurſion to Cumberland about twenty months ago, but I was ſo ſituated as not to have it in my power. I have for a long time deſiſted from even beſtowing a thought on political ſubjects, ſo far as they regard Great Britain, they being, I believe, quite out of the reach of private aid or admonition. That has come to paſs, which I alluded to in my early and latter correſpondence with you as Ancient Chairman of the Committee of the County of York.

Lady Buchan joins in beſt compliments to youand Mrs. Wyvill, and in beſt wiſhes for

the welfare of your family, and I remain, with true eſteem,

Your obliged humble ſervant,

BUCHAN.

EDINBURGH, *March 18th*, 1805.

Extract *of* LETTER XXVIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* EARL *of* BUCHAN.

BURTON-HALL, *March 22d*, 1805.

My Lord,

WITH reſpect to the gloomy ſtate of politics at preſent, I certainly agree with your Lordſhip. I think the Court has ſucceeded completely in what has been the uniform purſuit of nearly this whole Reign. Yet reſpecting the future fate of the Nation, whether it is deſtined to ſubmit, with the abject baſeneſs of men, too cowardly, or too corrupt to be free, or a ſtruggle will be made to recover our Parliament to that independence which alone can render it uſeful to the Country, I do not pretend to form an opinion. I cannot ſay I ſee diſtinctly any ground of hope that the balance of the Conſtitution can be righted by ſuch means as we alone wiſh to be employed. And other means, if they ſhould be unfortunately reſorted to, would certainly occaſion the moſt dreadful calamities; and yet the reſtoration of Liberty by ſuch hazardous efforts would be a moſt uncertain conſequence. I therefore moſt anxiouſly deprecate any forcible ſtruggle; and if that can be

be prevented, even in the event of great diſcontent ariſing in the Country in the courſe of this War, I then ſhould hope a favourable turn to Public Affairs might be given, by wiſe and virtuous men taking the opportunity which adverſity would again preſent, to promote meaſures, which, if not amounting to a juſt and full correction of abuſes, would yet leave Liberty in a ſtate of improvement and increaſed ſecurity. But this it muſt be owned is a precarious and doubtful ſpeculation; and it affords no very ſubſtantial conſolation in the gloomy circumſtances in which we are placed.

Mrs. Wyvill begs to join me in compliments to Lady Buchan; and if it ſhould be in your power, on your next excurſion into England with her, to viſit Burton, it would give us great pleaſure to have the honour of receiving Lady Buchan and your Lordſhip. * I am,

My Lord,

Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

* The Editor's grateful acknowledgments are due to the Earl of Buchan; and he pays them with the ſincereſt pleaſure, for the ſupport which his mind has found during a long political ſtruggle, and often in circumſtances of a diſcouraging tendency, from the many expreſſions of his decided approbation, with which his Lordſhip has honoured him. But his thanks are particularly due to Lord Buchan for the friendly zeal with which he prompted him, at Dryburgh-Abbey, when he had recently performed his promiſed taſk to publiſh the Papers of the Yorkſhire Committee, to add his private correſpondence of a ſubſequent period; of which the greater part is now offered to the Public in this and a preceding Volume; and the Editor is ſtill more obliged to Lord Buchan for that truſt in his diſcretion which induced his Lordſhip to place at his diſpoſal the whole of his letters, ſome of which had been unſeen by him for many years, and all were communications of a confidential nature. In the execution of this honourable truſt

truſt, the Editor has been guided by motives which, he hopes, will juſtify the confidence of his Noble Correſpondent. He has forborne to publiſh a conſiderable part of the correſpondence, becauſe it related to ſubjects not ſufficiently intereſting to the Public. But after the ſuppreſſion of theſe l tters, thoſe which remained, and which have been ſelected for inſertion here, are numerous and important; and in them the political ſentiments and views of the Noble Patriot are clearly diſplayed.

The Editor dares to add, it would have been well for the community if the Peerage of theſe Countries had been generally animated with Lord Buchan's zeal for the genuine principles of the Conſtitution, and had acted with the ſame unqueſtionable integrity, on the ſame pacific views to ſupport them.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXIX.

Containing the EDITOR's *Correſpondence with the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

LETTER I.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONDON, *30th April*, 1792.

Sir,

I Return you many thanks for the honour of your Pamphlets. I have ſo much veneration and affection for the memory of Dr. Price, that I feel every juſtice done to it as an obligation to myſelf.

I am very glad that you find any encouragement to reſume the views in the proſecution of which you acted ſo honourable and ſo diſtinguiſhed a part. I always conſidered the continuance of the Adminiſtration of 1782 in office, as ſtaked to the obtaining the great point of increaſing the County Repreſentation, if not the ſhortening the duration of Parliament, which were the objects, that the ſound part of the Public had for a long time agreed in adopting. I obtained a promiſe in favour of the one, and never gave up the other. How the plan afterwards came to be changed for one to which nobody was pledged, and which therefore

therefore had no chance of ſucceeding, always has been, and ſtill remains a myſtery to me.

I conſider the Teſt-Act as a diſgrace to the Church; but after what has paſſed I think the Diſſenters have no buſineſs to ſtand forward as principals. They may prove active and powerful aſſiſtants towards obtaining points of a more comprehenſive nature, which, once accompliſhed, the Teſt-Act and other leſſer enormities will of themſelves crumble to nothing.

I am ſorry to add that there is no diſpoſition in the Weſt; but it is to be hoped that it will not be found altogether void of life, if ſerious and well calculated meaſures are brought forward elſewhere. But I perfectly agree with you, that whatever plan is proceeded upon, requires to be adapted to the ſpirit of the preſent times, and the progreſs which Conſtitutional Principles have ſince made. I am,

With great conſideration and eſteem,
Sir,
Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,
LANSDOWN. *

* The Editor could not prepare this ſeries of letters for the preſs without feeling afreſh the moſt ſincere concern and ſorrow for the event of his Noble Correſpondent's death. A Statesman like Lord Lanſdown, able, eloquent, and liberal, whoſe judgment was matured by experience, whoſe ſyſtem of policy was pacific, whoſe zeal for the true principles of our Conſtitution was ſincere, and whoſe age gave authority to his counſels, though it had impaired the vigour of his body, could ill be ſpared in the preſent difficulties and dangers which ſurround the Nation. The death of Lord Lanſdown in the laſt ſummer, was indeed a misfortune to the Public; and to the Editor, who was honoured for many years with his friendly good-will, and finally with a ſhare in his confidence, it was a loſs which he will always lament.

At

LETTER II.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *near Bedale, Yorkſhire, May 4th*, 1792.

My Lord,

I HAVE received the honour of your Lordſhip's letter of the 30th of April; which, having been directed to York, did not reach Burton till yeſterday; and I find, with particular ſatisfaction, that my attempt to do juſtice to the character of Dr. Price, and to recommend a temperate and timely correction of abuſes in the State and in the Church, is honoured with your Lordſhip's approbation. And though ſome late ſpeeches in Parliament

At an early part of his political courſe, the Editor received the firſt marks of Lord Lanſdown's eſteem in converſation, and in correſpondence with his Lordſhip during ſeveral years in which he acted as Chairman of the Yorkſhire Committee. In the year 1785 the conduct of Mr. Pitt, at that time the King's principal Miniſter, afforded the Yorkſhire Gentlemen reaſon to expect that the renovation of the Conſtitution, which was the great object of their Aſſociation, through his influence and perſevering fidelity to his principles and his engagement might be obtained. At this time, therefore, the Editor, though he retained a high reſpect for the character of Lord Lanſdown, as a ſincere and uniform Friend to the Cauſe of Political Reform, yet thought it his duty, for the promotion of that Cauſe, more particularly to attach himſelf to Mr. Pitt. Still expecting that the time would come when the greateſt benefits to his Country would be derived from that Miniſter's patriotic zeal, the Editor remained politically connected with him till the year 1793. In the intermediate ſpace of time, from 1785 to 1793, he had no perſonal intercourſe with Lord Lanſdown; and during that period, the only letter which he received from his Lordſhip was that which ſtands the firſt of this ſeries, and in which his opinion of the defence of Dr. Price is favourably expreſſed. In 1794 the Editor publiſhed the firſt three Volumes of this Collection, in which were included Papers and Letters reſpecting Lord Lanſdown, and particularly reſpecting his Meſſage to the Editor, through the Rev. Francis Dodſworth

Parliament bear a very unfavourable aſpect to any Reformation in the State, yet I am inclined to believe that the time is not diſtant, when objections to engage ſeriouſly in the taſk of removing the grievances complained of, grounded merely on the circumſtances of *the time* and *the mode*, will give way to the declared ſenſe of many conſiderable Diſtricts, which will undoubtedly be conveyed to Parliament next winter from the North of England, with greater energy, and in more numerous Petitions, than in any former period. And I think it not improper to add, that in the moſt populous parts of Yorkſhire the

Dodſworth; by whom he intimated his intention, as a Miniſter, to ſupport the meaſures of the Yorkſhire Aſſociation *.

Soon after the publication of thoſe Volumes, the Editor was ſummoned to attend as a witneſs on the trial of Mr. Horne Tooke and other State Priſoners. During his ſtay in London on that occaſion, Lord Lanſdown expreſſed a wiſh to ſee him; and the Editor having waited on his Lordſhip accordingly, explained his conduct reſpecting the meſſage, &c. ſo fully to Lord Lanſdown's ſatisfaction, and was himſelf ſo highly gratified by the frank and generous manner in which his Lordſhip expreſſed his approbation of the Editor's conduct, and his own continued attachment to the cauſe of Reform, that from that interview the former mutual eſteem was increaſed, and a confidential intercourſe gradually took place, which continued, without intermiſſion, to the cloſe of Lord Lanſdown's life. But while the Editor has been characterizing this truly-wiſe and patriotic Statesman, he has here blended with his merited praiſe the detail of ſome very minute ſelf-perſonalities. He is ſenſible of the impropriety, yet he hopes to meet the indulgent Reader's excuſe. The ſtatement of the circumſtances alluded to is neceſſary, that the accuracy of his aſſertion to Mr. Maſon in his letter of the 19th of July, 1794, † reſpecting his being then unconnected with Lord Lanſdown, may be eſtabliſhed beyond the poſſibility of doubt.

* See theſe Papers reſpecting the Meſſage at page 330, &c. in the 3d Volume of Political Papers.

† For this letter ſee the 5th Volume of Preliminary Papers, page 215. The Editor's veracity in the aſſertion which the Reader will find there, as it reſpects the Duke of Grafton and the Duke of Portland, needs no explanation; and as it reſpects Mr. Fox, it will be demonſtrated in the proper place.

principles

principles of Mr. Paine are ſpreading with rapidity, not only at Sheffield, where 2000 Manufacturers are aſſociated, but alſo in the neighbourhood of Leeds, Wakefield, and Halifax, where I believe men in power do not ſuſpect any ſuch diſpoſition; at leaſt, I have not obſerved that circumſtance to have been named in Parliament, though the Aſſociations of Sheffield and Mancheſter have. The ſame diſpoſition is alſo ſpreading among the lower claſſes of the people in the adjoining County of Derby. This diſaffection to the Conſtitution is much increaſed within a few weeks; and had I been aware of ſome of the circumſtances now mentioned previouſly to the publication of the Defence, I ſhould certainly have expreſſed my apprehenſions in much ſtronger terms.

With reſpect to the repeal of the Teſt-Acts, I have the honour entirely to concur in ſentiments with your Lordſhip. I wrote in favour of the Repeal of thoſe Acts, becauſe I thought them unjuſt to a very deſerving body of men, and as diſhonourable to Religion as they are contradictory to the principles of Liberty. But if the Diſſenters were to aſk my opinion, whether their application for a repeal of thoſe oppreſſive laws ſhould be renewed, I ſhould have no heſitation to declare, that I do not conceive that the meaſure can be brought forward again, with any advantage to the cauſe of Toleration, till the ſentiments of the generality of the Nation have been better reconciled to the idea of complete Religious Freedom. And even

were

were the Public properly prepared for that meaſure, and for ſome temperate Reform in he Church, it ſeems evident, that both thoſe alutary meaſures ought to be kept back till a moderate Reformation of Parliament can be obtained, which they would then follow, in all probability, as the natural and expected conſequences.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,
Your Lordſhip's moſt faithful
and obedient ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *May 11th*, 1795.

My Lord,

THE incloſed Reſolutions are the reſult of converſation with Mr. Francis, when I was in London on account of the late State Trials, and of ſubſequent correſpondence with other Members of the Society to whom they are addreſſed, after my return to Burton. In conſequence of theſe communications, they have received various corrections, which have moulded them into the ſhape in which they are now laid before your Lordſhip, and in which it has been reſolved to ſubſmit them to the Friends of the People *. Mr. Francis,

* For theſe Reſolutions ſee the 10th Preliminary Paper in the third Volume of Political Papers.

by

by the laſt poſt, informed me that the Society are very ſoon to reſume their Meetings, when theſe Reſolutions are to be taken into their immediate conſideration. If adopted by that Society, they probably would be agreed to by many other Aſſociations; and thus the Friends of Political Reformation, by confining their views within moderate bounds, would prevent the danger of a Revolution, to which a Theoretical Reform might expoſe us; and by propoſing no changes but thoſe which Mr. Pitt himſelf, in 1785, propoſed, or what in principle agree with them, would be enabled very much to diſconcert his oppoſition, and thus gain, perhaps, the only advantage from which ſucceſs at preſent can be hoped for. I am certain theſe views will meet your Lordſhip's approbation; and though I would not flatter myſelf too much, I yet hope and truſt the propoſitions themſelves are alſo ſuch as you could approve, and would conſider as a proper conciliatory offer, if generally adopted by the Popular Societies. †

With all good wiſhes to your Lordſhip perſonally, as well as high reſpect on a public account,

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
Your moſt faithful and
obedient ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

† In the year 1803, the Editor, who had then determined to publiſh theſe two Volumes of his private correſpondence, applied perſonally to Lord Lanſdown for his permiſſion to inſert a ſelect ſeries of his Lordſhip's letters, with which requeſt he moſt frankly complied.

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON HALL, *Dec. 6th*, 1795.

My Lord,

HAVING an opportunity to convey this letter to your Lordſhip by a ſafe hand, I avail myſelf to ſay ſome things I ſhould not commit to paper in the uſual conveyance of the poſt.

In the firſt place be aſſured, my Lord, I feel myſelf much honoured by the confidential truſt you are pleaſed to repoſe in me. I underſtand the letter you mean to confide to my care *, contains a vindication of your conduct

complied. The letters ſelected for this purpoſe were then ſubmitted to Lord Lanſdown's inſpection; and the publication of them received his approbation ſpecifically on the peruſal of each letter. This Number comprehends all the letters which Lord Lanſdown thus expreſsly allowed to be publiſhed. But though other valuable letters from Lord Lanſdown have been preſerved by the Editor, he forbears to publiſh them at preſent, becauſe they were not included in the ſeries which was ſhewn to his Lordſhip in 1803, and which, on peruſal, he allowed to be publiſhed. The anſwer to this letter is among thoſe which are excluded from this ſeries.

If the inquiſitive Reader ſhould wiſh to aſk why theſe ſuppreſſed letters were not ſhown to Lord Lanſdown in 1803, the Editor truly anſwers becauſe his Noble Correſpondent's health was then very infirm; and the Editor feared that too extenſive a peruſal of his letters might be injurious to him. For this reaſon, and alſo becauſe expreſſions of a perſonal nature occurred in one or two of the letters, which ſeemed to render their appearance unadviſable, the Editor determined to ſelect the moſt important part of the correſpondence, but to keep back thoſe letters which appeared leſs important, or which, from motives of delicacy, he wiſhed to poſtpone to a more convenient time.

* The Editor was miſtaken in his ſuppoſition that the Paper intended by Lord Lanſdown to be put into his hands would contain a vindication of his conduct, reſpecting Parliamentary Reform. He afterwards underſtood that it contained his opinion and advice reſpecting the beſt mode of reforming Parliament.

reſpecting Parliamentary Reform; I rejoice at your having drawn it up; I accept the honourable truſt with pleaſure, and will punctually obſerve, and to the utmoſt of my power fulfil the conditions which you may annex to it.

With reſpect to Yorkſhire, I wiſh to ſay ſomewhat in confidence, that may prevent unfortunate miſtakes. On the firſt of December we were greatly out-numbered indeed. Our friends went home, however, not diſpirited, much leſs diſſatisfied with the meaſures propoſed; and, in fact, much more was done than could have been done a year ago. But Yorkſhire muſt not be expected to add any conſiderable weight to the popular ſcale, till the Clothiers have felt a check in their manufacture, or the Yeomen a fall in the produce of their farms. When either of theſe events has taken place, we ſhall be able to come forward with a powerful effect; more eſpecially, if at the ſame time Miniſters ſhould be compelled to bring forward an additional Land-Tax.

At preſent many of the Gentry are adverſe, ſome violently ſo; the Freeholders are better inclined to our meaſures; but they want intelligence and zeal; and till they feel the preſſure of calamity, little active ſupport to the moſt regular and pacific oppoſition can be expected from them.

I conclude with my beſt wiſhes to your Lordſhip, particularly for the ſpeedy recovery of your health, and am ever,

My Lord,

Moſt faithfully your's,

Z C. WYVILL.

LETTER V.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

FURTON-HALL, *Dec.* 31*ſt*, 1795.

My Lord,

I Take the firſt opportunity, after my return from Mr. Duncombe's, to acknowledge the favour of your Lordſhip's letter, though I cannot ſufficiently expreſs the pleaſure I received from its contents. It is impoſſible that I ſhould not feel a pride in your approbation of my conduct, with a degree of heart-felt ſatisfaction far outweighing the diſagreeable ſenſations which the outrageous abuſe of my adverſaries muſt naturally occaſion. I have however the pleaſure to inform your Lordſhip that my juſtificatory paper has had the full effect I expected, or even could wiſh. The injuſtice and abſurd malignity of my accuſers ſeems to be generally felt; I ſtand abſolved in the opinion of the Gentlemen; and even the Freeholders perceive how groſsy I has been miſrepreſented to them.

But no vigorous oppoſition to the meaſured of Adminiſtration can be expected from this County till the conſequences of the War have been much more ſeverely felt. Even in other parts of the Kingdom which have been more awake to the impending dangers from the continuance of the War, and the extention of the power of the Crown, many ſeem to have relapſed into that ſtate of inactivity or deſponding acquieſcence from which the violent meaſures

ſures of Miniſters had rouzed them. It is a diſtreſſing conſideration that ſo little good ſenſe ſhould be manifeſted by the Nation, and that our only rational hope of preſerving any portion of Public Freedom is derived not from any general perception of its value, but from the calamitous conſequences which the pride and obſtinacy of Miniſters are bringing upon us. I agree with your Lordſhip entirely that it is the War alone that can open the eyes of our Countrymen; and ſince War is certain to be continued, Miniſters are ſure to furniſh calamity added to calamity, till at laſt patience itſelf can bear no more. I am glad to ſee ſuch men as Mr. Fox and the Duke of Bedford aſſociating for the purpoſe of obtaining a repeal of the two late deteſtable Acts; but I am hurt to find the word *only* added; it does indeed narrow their ground ſtrangely; and ſo to narrow it was neither a politic meaſure, nor one which it was not eaſy to have avoided. The omiſſion of that word would have left an opening to admit the more important meaſure of Reform; which is now excluded by their declaration that the repeal alluded to is the *only purpoſe* of the Aſſociation. I think, in conſequence of this excluſive limitation, their object, though in itſelf a valuable one, will not be ſufficiently intereſting to the Nation at large, to produce any degree of union that will be effectual, I wiſh therefore the word *only* had been ſtruck out; and if the Whig Club are not prepared at preſent to aſſociate on any particular plan of Reform, I wiſh at leaſt they had in general terms included Reform, and reſolved

ſolved at ſome future meeting to prepare a plan for that purpoſe. Your Lordſhip's firmneſs on the occaſion I highly reſpect and applaud; and I hope the time is not far diſtant when you and your friends may come forward upon that ſtrong ground which Mr Fox has neglected to occupy, *and may be joined by him upon* it*. His Club, as a Body, cannot paſs the limits which they have preſcribed; but the Individuals may, and from your Lordſhip's honourable and conſiſtent conduct, I hope they will.

I heartily wiſh, my Lord, you may reap all the benefit from the Bath waters which you expect, and am ever

Your Lordſhip's moſt faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

* The cenſure paſſed on the omiſſion of Mr. Fox, here alluded to, the Editor will frankly acknowledge to have been haſty and injudicious.

The conduct of that diſtinguiſhed Frieud of Liberty for many years has fully convinced the Editor that the omiſſion in queſtion ought not to be aſcribed to neglect, but to neceſſity; to the inability of Mr. Fox at that time to do better for the ſupport of Liberty. Lord Lanſdown, without the leaſt imprudence could, and he boldly did declare his ſentiments for a Political Reform, becauſe he ſtood, if not alone, at leaſt apart from that Great Body who had long oppoſed the exceſſive influence of the Crown.

Mr. Fox, who ſtood at the head of that Body, was for that very reaſon bound to act with greater caution. He could effectually aſſiſt the Cauſe of Liberty ouly by propoſing meaſures to which he could obtain the concurrence of that Body.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *May 15th*, 1797.

My Lord,

I Have great ſatisfaction in communicating to your Lordſhip the information that a Requiſition to the Sheriff to call a Meeting of the Freeholders of this County is now circulating through it; and from the intelligence I have received I believe a Meeting will take place in conſequence of this overture. Should that be the caſe, I flatter myſelf the event will juſtify the Mover of it, though much timidity and want of concert in the preſent ſtage of the buſineſs are certainly unfavourable circumſtances. The incloſed Paper contains a copy of the Requiſiton *, which I imagine your Lordſhip would like to ſee. A Petition to diſmiſs Miniſters will probably be offered to the Meeting.

I have the honour to be,

MyLord,

Your Lordſhip's very faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER VII.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *12th June*, 1797.

Dear Sir,

I Should have acknowledged the honour of your letter of the 6th of laſt month inſtantly,

* For this Requiſition ſee the 1ſt Preliminary Paper in this Volume

if I had had any thing encouraging to ſay; but I took leave of London laſt week without a hope as to either Peace or Reform. Yeſterday's letters however are more promiſing as to the firſt, though I may perſuade myſelf too readily or what I wiſh. They ſay that the French will inſiſt on Gibraltar for the Spaniards, who are ready to pay handſomely for it. If they pay us half what it has coſt us, we ſhall in my opinion be very well quit of it.

I think you have judged very well in deferring an Addreſs, if you find that the People are not quite up to it. If they are not to-day, they will be to-morrow, unleſs prevented by a change of meaſures. In the mean time it appears to me that Parliamentary Reform has taken complete root, and it will be out of the power of any Miniſtry to fight it off for any length of time, though they may for the preſent. I ſend you under another cover a paper from Ireland, which deſerves to be read as a compoſition. It is written by a Diſſenting Clergyman, at Belfaſt, whoſe name I do not know, and was going to be printed when the Star Office was deſtroyed.

I have the honour to be, with unalterable eſteem and attachment,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

LANSDOWN.

P. S. I ſuppoſe you know that an attempt was made to make an Adminiſtration entirely of Anti-Reformers, but failed.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 16th*, 1798.

My Lord,

I Incloſe for your Lordſhip's inſpection a copy of Reſolutions *, which I hope are likely to be adopted as the ground of an Aſſociation of ſeveral Counties in the North of England. They have been ſeen and approved by ſome worthy friends of mine in Durham and Northumberland. They have been ſhewn to Mr. Grey, and through him to Mr. Fox; and they have been approved by both thoſe Gentlemen: they have alſo been ſhewn to ſeveral of my friends in Yorkſhire, from whoſe approbation of them I am encouraged to hope that in the event of a ſucceſsful Meeting of this County there would be no very great difficulty in procuring the general aſſent of the Yorkſhire Gentlemen to an Aſſociation on the ground of theſe Reſolutions. But whether a ſucceſsful Meeting can be held in Yorkſhire this Spring or not, is a queſtion on which no deciſive opinion can yet be formed. If the principal friends of Mr. Fox, who are connected with Yorkſhire, will engage to give their active perſonal aſſiſtance at the Meeting, I have little doubt of ſucceſs, though not without a ſevere ſtruggle.

To this effect I have written to Mr. Fox on Saturday laſt; and ſhould his friends agree to

* For theſe Reſolutions ſee the 21ſt Preliminary Paper of the preceding Volume.

give the ſupport that has been ſtated to him as neceſſary to inſure ſucceſs, the County Meeting ſo long pending will take place, I ſhould ſuppoſe, ſome time in March, probably the firſt week.

When this important point is ſettled, I will not fail to communicate to your Lordſhip the earlieſt information of it.

In the mean time I thought it might not be unacceptable intelligence to inform you, my Lord, what is in agitation in this part of England, though the buſineſs is ſtill in an incipient ſtate, and nothing is yet aſcertained, or agreed on reſpecting the meditated Meetings.

I have the pleaſure to add, that ſince my return from York, I have found from various quarters that the Reſolutions of the firſt of January have been generally approved.

I hope this letter will find your Lordſhip returned from Bath in perfect health.

Believe me ever, my Lord,
Your moſt faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

P. S. Your Lordſhip is requeſted to attend to the words underlined in the ſecond of theſe Reſolutions. They were choſen to allow of compromiſe or latitude reſpecting the diſfranchiſement of the obnoxious Boroughs. Without ſuch a latitude, I do not ſee how your Lordſhip, in concurrence with Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey, can have any reaſonable proſpect of effecting a Reformation in Parliament, and yet avoiding the calamities of a Civil War. But with this latitude it may be in your power, and I am perfectly ſure you are all reſolved

to

to do the beſt you can for the Public. With reſpect to the admiſſion of Taxed Houſeholders to the right of voting, there is not the ſame difficulty, and therefore I hope the Friends of Reformation will generally be found to approve that article without limitation. I ſhall certainly feel moſt happy if your Lordſhip ſhould approve it, and think no relaxation on that point ought to be admitted.

LETTER IX.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONDON, 23*d January*, 1798.

Dear Sir,

I Returned from Bath laſt night, much the better for my ſtay there, and received upon the road the honour of your letter of the 16th inſtant.

I do not ſee how any body, except the determined enemies of all Reform, can object to the Reſolutions you propoſe, eſpecially qualified as they are in the ſecond. I have notions of my own which I am determined, ſooner or later, to lay before the Public, and through your channel, if you will give me leave, but none which come in the way of your Reſolutions, which have my full aſſent.

But here is Hanover loſt, and what is much worſe for G. B. the Elbe ſhut againſt us. The ableſt Commercial Men ſay that getting poſſeſſion of Hamburgh by negociation, or otherwiſe

wiſe, is next to the French getting poſſeſſion of London. There are other diſagreeable reports in circulation, particularly regarding Ireland, ſome regarding Scotland. I am afraid therefore that our misfortunes will multiply upon us too faſt for the ſlow proceeding you mention. And yet I perfectly agree with you that a defeat is on no account to be riſqued, for I am much afraid the conſequence would be, by what you mention in your's, a line might be drawn between the Rich and the Poor, which of all evils is the one moſt to be dreaded.

I will with great pleaſure ſubſcribe five guineas to the Oeconomiſt, but not more till I ſee how it proceeds. I read the firſt number you were ſo good to ſend me curſorily, (I have not it now within reach) but I cannot ſay that I quite approve the paper about Leaſes. * I am a friend to Leaſes of a reaſonable length, particularly where land is not improved to the utmoſt, but it muſt remain in the diſcretion of the Proprietor; no legal or conſtitutional interference can be ſuffered without violating the fundamental rights of Property †. I conſider all the Governments of Europe in the light of a retreating army, which, if commanded by an able General, takes poſſeſſion of

* For the Paper on Leaſes ſee the 1ſt Number of the Oeconomiſt, page 9.

† Nothing can be more juſt than the ſentiments here expreſſed by Lord Lanſdown. There is an abſolute neceſſity that the Rights of Property ſhould never be violated by any legal interference reſpecting the mode of management of Landed Eſtates. In the Paper in queſtion long Leaſes and other regulations ſuppoſed to be uſeful are recommended with ſtrenuous zeal to the Proprietors of Land; but the compulſive adoption of thoſe regulations by any interference

of one poſt at a certain diſtance, which they determine to defend to the laſt extremity; and that poſt, I conceive, ſhould be, in the preſent ſtate of things, the right of property in its fulleſt extent. I could ſay a great deal upon this ſubject, but I have not time juſt now, and perhaps I may in a hurry have miſtaken the tendency of the paper in queſtion. In the Weſt the Farmers are by far the leaſt aggrieved of any deſcription. The Peaſantry are much to be pitied, and call loudly for ſome redreſs; I mean their ſituation does.

I am very ſorry to hear that our friend, Lord Stanhope, thinks of quitting Europe at a time that his aſſiſtance is wanting to ſave it.

I am, with moſt ſincere reſpect,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble ſervant,

LANSDOWN.

interference of the Legiſlature is not there recommended; and no doubt the worthy Writer of that Paper would have diſavowed the intention or the wiſh to recommend any ſuch legal compulſion, had he foreſeen the objection. But Lord Lanſdown was not ſingular in his apprehenſion concerning the tendency of this Paper. In that trembling criſis of the Nation it was almoſt impoſſible to diſcuſs ſubjects of importance with ſufficient freedom, and yet to avoid exciting ſuſpicion, even in the moſt candid and judicious minds. But the miſtruſt of Lord Lanſdown appears to have been ſoon diſmiſſed with his uſual candour.

LETTER

LETTER X.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *June 21ſt*, 1798.

My Lord,

BY circuitous information from Bath, I have juſt learned the very indifferent ſtate of your Lordſhip's health, not many days ago. The intelligence afflicts me; and I loſe no time to expreſs my concern, and my earneſt wiſhes for a better account from your Lordſhip, for I am willing to hope that there may have been ſome exaggeration from the natural ſolicitude of your friends, and that writing may not now be too troubleſome to you, and the cauſe of alarm not ſo great as it has been. Be aſſured, my Lord, I feel much concern on a perſonal account, but ſtill more for the ſake of the Public, at a criſis when ſafety can only be expected from the prevalence of thoſe counſels which you and Mr. Fox have ſo long, though hitherto with unavailing wiſdom, endeavoured to recommend. You have my moſt anxious wiſhes for your ſpeedy recovery.

I am,
My Lord,
With the greateſt truth,
Your Lordſhip's faithful
humble ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *23d July*, 1798.

Dear Sir,

I CAN ſcarce expreſs to you how much I have been touched by your kind inquiries, and the expreſſions of your good opinion; I aſſure you that there is no man's in the world I value more. I have gone through a long wearisome illneſs, but by no means a dangerous one, and the continuance of this bad weather has prevented my gaining all the benefit which I uſually do by my way of life here, and made me a bad correſpondent to all my friends, elſe I ſhould certainly noe have been ſo to Mr. Wyvill.

I have been fretted at not being able to find a very long letter I wrote two or three years ſince, and waited only a proper moment to addreſs to you on a Reform of Parliament. As I ventured to take up the ſubject in a new way and upon new principles, I diſtruſted the juſtice of my own ideas, and determined to diſmiſs the ſubject for ſome time from my mind, that I might re-conſider them before I determined to bring them before the Public. But I own to you that I never was diſpoſed to deſpond of our ſituation till now. I am not now afraid of our loſing either Eaſt or Weſt Indies, or of the conſequences if we do; but there appears to me a ſettled plan to ſacrifice the landed to the money intereſt, for the ſake

of

on carrying on this unprincipled War ad infinitum. The principle once admitted, I ſee neither ſpirit nor wiſdom to ſtop its evil progreſs, which muſt end in downright ruin.

I have been much pleaſed with ſome papers upon the nature of Property, which I met with in one of the French Journals. As you may like to caſt your eye upon them, I will ſend a tranſlation of them, which is not finiſhed ee time to go by this poſt; but I will not fail to forward it to you by to-morrow's *. If you had no objection, I would requeſt you to forward them by ſome proper opportunity to the Oeconomiſt. The few lines of introduction you will be ſo good to inſert, or throw them into the fire, as you pleaſe. It lies upon my conſcience that I have not paid my ſubſcription. I ſhall be much obliged to you to know if there is any body at Bath, Briſtol, or London who is entruſted to receive them. I conſider mine as annual, and ſhall be ready to extend it, if it is requſite.

I have been interrupted ſince I begun this letter by ſome viſitors; but, to ſay the truth, ſtill more by the weather, which makes the ſlighteſt exertion a grievance. But I have no doubt of getting gradually better. Lord Holland writes from Newcaſtle without making any mention of rain; here we have been overpowered with it. Believe me ever,

My Dear Sir,
Your moſt faithful ſervant,
LANSDOWN.

* For this Paper, intitled "a Memoir concerning Property," ſee the 1ſt Volume of the Oeconomiſte, page 252: for the introductory lines, with the ſignature, Celſus, annexed, ſee page 250.

LETTER XII.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *3d. of August*, 1798.

Dear Sir,

NOTHING can be more juſt and reaſonable than your Paper * about Ireland. I return it with a great many thanks for the confidence you do me the honour to repoſe in me. I do not ſee that there is a word which can be objected to, except our "carrying diſmay and terror, &c." which I have taken the liberty to underline with my pencil. I agree with you that this ought to have been the caſe, but has it been? I agree likewiſe with you, that mercy and *redreſs* are the only means which can preſerve Ireland: but the grievances under which they labour are preciſely the ſame of which this Country complains. It will therefore be impoſſible to redreſs one, without redreſſing the other; and I am afraid that we have ſtill leſs probability of ſucceeding here than there. However this be, Ireland cannot go on as it has hitherto done, that is, under a No-Government. Independence cannot ſuit Ireland for a long time to come, the maſs of the People being unprepared and uneducated for it. It would ſtill leſs ſuit this Country; for Ireland

* For this Paper ſee the 1ſt Volume of the Oeconomiſt, page 222. The letter to Lord Lanſdown which accompanied this Paper, has not been preſerved. About this time ſome other letters muſt have been addreſſed to his Lordſhip by the Editor, of which copies have not been kept.

inedpendent,

independent, together with America on the one ſide, and France on the other, we inſtantly become either an immediate object of foreign conqueſt or revolution. I can ſee, therefore, nothing to be done, except, in the firſt place, to make Peace with France, which is the ground-work of all remaining good; (I obſerved, in 1782, Ireland cooled exactly in proportion as the negociations for Peace advanced) and afterwards to adopt an uniform and juſt ſyſtem of Repreſentation in one or both Countries, which is the only means which carry any chance of recovering us from the abyſs into which we are ſunk.

I am ſorry to hear that Lord Cornwallis is meeting with great oppoſition from People of Conſequence, beſides what proceeds from the Beresfords; for violent and ſanguinary meaſures, it ſeems, are popular among the Higheſt Orders.—Sad effects of a long ſyſtem of Corruption!

Celſus is not worth a thought, except to introduce the other Papers, which I think well written upon a ſubject not ſufficiently dwelt upon by any Engliſh Author, at leaſt whom I have met with.—You will receive the remaining ſheets by the next and following poſts.

I have too good an opinion both of Mr. Bigge and Dr. Fenwick not to think myſelf perfectly ſafe in their hands in matters of far greater importance. Believe me,

My Dear Sir,

Ever moſt truly your's,

LANSDOWN.

LETTER XIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *Nov.* 23, 1797.

My Lord,

I HAVE juſt received from Mr. Bigge the incloſed copy of his propoſals, in which I think your Lordſhip will find a ſtrain of benevolence to approve, and a lowneſs of price to be ſurpriſed at. I wiſh Mr. Grey and other friends of Mr. Bigge may communicate pieces avowing their names, and have recommended it to him, if poſſible, to procure their aſſiſtance in that way.

I am happy to hear your Lordſhip intends throwing your thoughts upon Reform together, and committing them to the Public. I conceive you will do the Public a moſt eſſential ſervice by it. If our Liberties and our Conſtitution can be ſaved, it can only be effected by the exertions of ſuch men as yourſelf. But I begin to fear, with your Lordſhip, it is too late; we muſt, I fear, ſink under the immenſity of our burthens; or if, in a burſt of popular fury, we cancel our debts, in that way we ſhall meet our ruin.

I am ever, my Lord,
With high eſteem and regard,
Your moſt faithful
and obedient ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XIV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *Sept. 7th*, 1798.

My Lord,

MY having given your Lordſhip one trouble, ſeems an odd reaſon for giving you another; but it is a natural one, and the ſecond part of my "Eſſay * on the Preſent State of Ireland," follows the firſt to Bowood of courſe. It contains nothing more than a little preliminary and precautionary matter, which in theſe jealous times you will think, I hope, not improper; and alſo a ſketch of the Redreſs which I mean to recommend in my next, both for England and Ireland. For I think with your Lordſhip, that the ſame Redreſs will be proper for both Countries, and that in the courſe of the preſent ſtruggle it will be gained for both, or neither of them.

Two days ago your Lordſhip's ſubſcription was ſent to Mr. Bigge, with the ſecond part of the Eſſay on Property; the third part was reſerved, at his requeſt, till another month, to prevent confuſion and poſſible miſtakes.

I am preparing to go to Hartlepool with my numerous family, like Jacob to the Land of Canaan. We ſhall ſtart to-morrow, and propoſe ſtaying a month, during which time I hope to be favoured with a letter from your Lordſhip, and I ſhall be very happy if

* For this 2d Part ſee the 1ſt Volume of the Oeconomiſt, page 265.

my

my, ſecond paper is honoured, as the firſt, was with your approbation. But the arduous part of the buſineſs remains to be done.†

It will give me very great pleaſure to hear the fine weather for ſome weeks paſt has perfectly re-eſtabliſhed your health. Your harveſt, I imagine, has long been got in; ours is nearly ſo, which is a month earlier than uſual. I am,

My Lord,
With the greateſt regard,
Moſt truly and faithfully your's,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XV.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *14th Sept.* 1798.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE the honour to return the ſecond letter, which has my entire approbation. I have taken the liberty of communicating it to Mr. Romilly, who is here, and deſires, as well as Mr. Dumont, to be particularly remembered to you. He approves it as much as I do; but we agree in thinking your plan too wiſe and too moderate to pleaſe either Party.

All accounts agree in the probability of a new War between France and Auſtria, in

† For reaſons which it is needleſs to explain, the intended 3d Part of the Eſſay on the preſent State of Ireland was never finiſhed.

which I make no doubt our Miniſters have taken care to entangle us, moſt probably to make us Principals. Where is all this to end?

I wiſh Jacob and his family all poſſible benefit from the ſea air. I find myſelf much indebted to the fine weather, and to riding from two to four hours before breakfaſt. We have finiſhed our wheat harveſt long ſince, and hope to finiſh our barley harveſt, which is always late in theſe parts, to-morrow.

Notwithſtanding the ſurrender of the French troops, the letters from Ireland are not pleaſant. It is a ſtrange infatuation keeping Mr. Beresford, &c. in more power than the Lord Lieutenant, and proves very plainly the difficulty and danger which any plan of Reform will have to encounter. Believe me,

My Dear Sir,

Moſt truly your's,

LANSDOWN.

LETTER XVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *March 4th*, 1799.

My Lord,

I Hope your Lordſhip received a printed paper of mine a few weeks ago on the Seceſſion from Parliament; and though you are not in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech a Seceder, I believe, yet you accord ſo nearly with thoſe who are, in abſenting yourſelf from Parliament, in avowing your

your attachment to the principles of Liberty and recommending a pacific ſyſtem of foreign policy, that I flatter myſelf what they generally approve may alſo meet, in the main, your Lordſhip's approbation.

My Paper was intended for publication, but ſo much are the Bookſellers intimidated by the late ſeverities, that not one has dared to be my Publiſher, either in Town or Country. This is the more remarkable, as they were all previouſly informed that an eminent Lawyer had been conſulted on the point of legality, and had pronounced the Pamphlet to be according to law. But even this, which was Mr. E.'s opinion, could not overcome their fears, and publication, in the uſual way at leaſt, muſt be given up. After this, where is the Freedom of the Preſs? or what have we left, but the Trial by Jury, which yet we cannot long hope to retain, to any good purpoſe, under the preſent Rulers. I repeat what I have formerly ſaid, that I have no hope but in the union of ſuch men as your Lordſhip and Mr. Fox.

I am, with high regard,
My Lord,
Your moſt faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XVII.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

LONDON, *12th March*, 1799.

Dear Sir,

I SHOULD have thanked you for your Defence of the Seceſſion immediately after I received it, but my time has been entirely taken up with ſome family affairs. As to the meaſure of ſeceding, I cannot ſay that I ever much approved it, for two reaſons; one, that tho' perhaps all the good that may be deſired may not be to be accompliſhed, ſome may, of which there have been ſeveral examples in the laſt forty years. The other is, that I ſee no meaſure to follow which will ſerve to keep men together, and occupy the public mind—however I have ſaid very little about it, as I do not deſire to intrude my opinion where I know by experience that I have little or no weight. The truth is, that the refinement of a mixed Conſtitution—the falſe Government which has prevailed ſince the beginning of Sir Robert Walpole's time—the degeneracy of the Whig Party—the vaſt increaſe of trade and commerce, and the commercial manners which have ſpread in conſequence—the incalculable, as you very properly term it, increaſe of the power of the Crown—the general relaxation ariſing from good as well as bad cauſes, equally operating on the public mind—all theſe cauſes combined have deſtroyed the ſucceſſion of public men within doors, and of public virtue without—

without.—Nothing is to be looked for except what may reſult from the ſlow, but ſure conſequence of the ſpirit of reaſoning and diſcuſſion, which daily increaſes at home and abroad, and which muſt end in ſome new ſtate of things. The Iriſh queſtion now in agitation I think very likely to haſten it. Tranſitions, however, are very dangerous, as it is very difficult to be ſure of reſtraining them within the due bounds of the Conſtitution.

You have been miſinformed in ſuppoſing that the Negociation of Liſle went off on account of the Cape and Trincomale. You may depend upon it, that Peace never was really meant, but the intention was to amuſe the Public, and to endeavour to throw the blame on the Enemy.

I am, dear Sir,
With unalterable eſteem,
Your faithful humble ſervant,
LANSDOWN.

LETTER XVIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *Oct. 26th*, 1799.

My Lord,

I DULY received your Lordſhip's kind letter of the 12th of March laſt, and I felt myſelf extremely obliged by the friendly frankneſs with which you explained to me your ſentiments reſpecting the Seceſſion from Parliament, and the reaſons which have hitherto

prevented your Lordſhip's union with the principal Seceders, in anſwer to a letter of mine, in which I mentioned that union as a meaſure on which the welfare of the Country ſeemed very much to depend.

I have had theſe important communications much in my thoughts, and often wiſhed to return my acknowledgments to your Lordſhip; which yet has not been done till ſo many months have now paſſed, that a ſilence ſo much longer than uſual ſeems to ſtand in need of an apology. But the honeſt truth is the only apology to be offered; and that is, that I was embarraſſed, and every day ſeemed to add to my embarraſſment. All thoughts of Peace, all regard to the Conſtitution ſeemed to be thrown aſide, not only by Miniſters, but by the body of the Nation. Our allies triumphed in Switzerland and Italy; and we partook the triumph, not foreſeeing the reverſe that was ſure to come, and not regarding that ruin which was every day approaching nearer and nearer. This was bad indeed, it was very diſcouraging; and to make it ſtill more ſo, there ſeemed to be no hope of united counſels and united efforts in thoſe quarters to which alone we could look for effectual aſſiſtance and final deliverance.

Events upon the Continent, within the laſt month, however, ſeem likely to check the preſumption and pride of England, and incline the Public to Peace, although the Court ſhould not be willing to give up the War. And within the ſame ſhort period, ſeveral events of a domeſtic nature have occured, which evidently

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tend to increaſe the general deſire for Peace, and at the ſame time to weaken the Miniſter's hold upon the Public Mind, and leſſen his power to reſiſt the demand of Peace and Reform. I will confine myſelf to mention only two; and they are the diſembodying of the Supplementary Militia, and the refuſal to receive the Land-Tax. The firſt I ſuppoſe is a general meaſure; it has juſt now been announced to the North-Yorkſhire Supplementals, and I underſtand it has much diſguſted the Officers of that Corps. The other meaſure alluded to is the refuſal to receive the Land-Tax from thoſe who have not been purchaſers; and this alſo I conceive muſt be a general meaſure. That the Land-Tax has been refuſed in this neighbourhood is certain; mine which had been paid to the Parochial Collector, has been repaid to me, becauſe the Receiver would not take it; and I underſtand the reſt were alſo refuſed. Where the refuſal has been known, the alarm created has been great; and if the order to refuſe has been a general one, there can be little doubt I think but it will rouze the Landed Intereſt throughout Great-Britain to a proper ſenſe of their danger. The reverſe in Switzerland and the miſcarriage in Holland would be forgotten or forgiven, if all was well at home. But meaſures like theſe, though comparatively unimportant in appearance, will offend the pride of every high-minded Officer in the Militia, and hurt the feelings of every prudent father of a family in the claſs of landed men. And I can venture, my Lord, to aſſure you that I have heard ſtronger expreſ-

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ſions of diſlike and alarm at the deſpotic conduct of the Miniſter on this occaſion than on any former; and that from ſome perſons who did not uſually agree with me on theſe ſubjects. And though I would not be too ſanguine in expecting any great change of opinion ſuddenly, yet I think theſe meaſures will be found to have a very beneficial effect in bringing the Public Mind to that manly temper, without which all is loſt. Still, however, I hunger and thirſt for the union ſo often alluded to.

The events which have been the ſubject of this letter have occurred ſince our return from Hartlepool. We there met the Dowager Lady Darlington, who is, I believe, a friend of your Lordſhip's, and who I am ſorry to ſay is in a very declining ſtate of health; for ſhe is a very prudent and a very benevolent woman. I underſtand from her Ladyſhip that you, my Lord, and your family were gone to the ſea at Bognor. I hope this letter will find you returned home, with all poſſible benefit to you and your's. I am ſure we have great reaſon to be thankful for the good effects of our expedition

Accept my beſt wiſhes, my Lord, and believe me ever, with moſt ſincere reſpect,

Your faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *1ſt Nov.* 1799.

Dear Sir,

THE Public are certainly dead to conſtitutional feelings, and, I imagine, will continue ſo as long as the dread of Jacobiniſm over-rules every public ſentiment. I look upon the uſage of the Militia one of the many advantages which Miniſtry take of the times. In other times it would not be to be endured. It may be intereſting to you to know that no ſuch meaſure as you mention, regarding the Land-Tax, has been thought of in theſe parts. I have not bought my Land-Tax any where, and ſince I received your letter I have made particular inquiry, and find it has been paid and received juſt as uſual. It is impoſſible that ſuch a meaſure as you mention could be thought of in any but a Revolutionary Government, and at any rate Parliament would be the firſt place we ſhould hear of it in. I underſtand Government are much taken up with different ſchemes of increaſing or inventing ſome new circulating medium, as it is called. It is a tickliſh buſineſs, and requires great wiſdom, while you attempt to remedy one evil, not to fall into another—What is become of the Oeconomiſt?

The beſt accounts from France agree in their general and ſincere deſire of Peace, both Government and the Public. The Abbe

Syeyes,

Syeyes, I am aſſured, is particularly, who uſed to be conſidered as not over and above inclined to one, at leaſt with this Country. He appears to have juſt now the principal influence. I am much obliged by your kind inquiries about my health. I am much better than I have been for years. I ſincerely wiſh you and your family that and every comfort.

No one is more truly your's.

LANSDOWN.

LETTER XX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON HALL, *Jan. 2d*, 1800.

My Lord,

ON making further inquiry in Yorkſhire, &c. reſpecting the refuſal of the old Land-Tax, I have found your Lordſhip's conjecture fully confirmed, viz. that it was not a meaſure of Government, but of the inferior Offices only; occaſioned by the want of proper returns to the Receivers, by which they might have been enabled to diſtinguiſh the eſtates which were diſcharged from the payment in queſtion from thoſe which were not. In many parts of Yorkſhire the Tax has been refuſed; and in this Northern Part of it, the refuſal, I am told, has been nearly univerſal, and was accompanied by declarations of the Clerks, which had the form and effect of threats that the old Tax would be no more accepted. At preſent theſe are empty

empty unauthorized menaces; but the time may come, and may not be very diſtant, when a deſperate Miniſter will riſque an exaction ſo very harſh, ſo very unequitable, as the one alluded to. Indeed the ſupineneſs and imbecility of the Landed Proprietors ſeem almoſt to invite it.

The Oeconomiſt, I have lately heard from Mr. Bigge, will appear no more; and the Number for December, containing the concluding paper, has juſt been ſent me from York. In the paper which cloſes the publication, the Editor's reaſons for diſcontinuing it are hinted at, without any particular and diſtinct explanation. I will therefore mention a few circumſtances which the Editors did not chooſe to lay before the Public, although they ſeem in a conſiderable degree to corroborate their general reaſoning for dropping a work which for ſome time had received extraordinary encouragement, and well deſerved it, from the benevolence of its deſign, and the ability and moderation with which it was conducted. I believe that for ſome months not leſs than ten thouſand copies were ſold. This extenſive diſtribution of a work ſo friendly to Peace, Liberty, and Reform, gave umbrage to the Crown-Lawyers, and the ſmallneſs of the price added fear to their uneaſineſs. To proſecute the Editors was unadviſable; it was in fact impracticable; but to impede and finally ſtop the publication, by intimidating the Bookſellers, and preventing the ſale of this Miſcellany, was neither difficult nor unſafe. The fact, I believe, is, that in

London

London various Bookſellers were ſucceſſively engaged to diſtribute the Oeconomiſt; but means were ſoon found to convince each of the Bookſellers engaged, that there was danger in perſevering to diſtribute this paper, and each, in ſucceſſion, gave up an employment from which a moderate profit could only be expected, at the hazard of fine and impriſonment. The fears of the London Bookſellers were quickly communicated to thoſe in the Country, and, in ſome inſtances, particularly known to myſelf, threats of information and proſecution were applied with ſeverity by ſome imperious adherents of Miniſters, and had the deſired effect of preventing, in this part of the Country, the diſtribution of the obnoxious Pamphlet. At laſt theſe unworthy exertions had ſo far ſucceeded as to reduce the circulation of it to leſs than a ſixth part of its former extent. From this great diminution of its ſale, no beneficial effects adequate to their toil ſeemed likely to reward the Editor's perſeverance. The diſcontinuance of their Pamphlet may juſtly be regretted; it was an eaſy vehicle of much uſeful inſtruction, particularly to the lower claſſes of ſociety: and on the ſubjects of War, and our internal Abuſes its aim uniformly was to enlighten without inflaming the People. But conſidering theſe circumſtances and the rancourous temper of the times, not yet ſubdued by misfortune to any degree of reaſonable tractability, I truſt your Lordſhip will agree with me in thinking that the Editors are juſtifiable in their retreat. Their paſt exertions have been truly meritorious

torious, and they now pauſe and reſt from their labours only to renew them with greater animation and more advantage to the Public at the criſis which is approaching. I cannot quit this ſubject without lamenting the fettered ſtate to which the preſs is reduced. Of all the hardſhips and violations of Right which are the effect of Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration, though not produced by his immediate agency, this reſtraint of the Preſs is moſt to be lamented; it is a meaſure altogether revolu- of diſcuſſion which is the guardian of all our tionary in its tendency; it annihilates that right other Rights; it deſtroys our beſt ground of hope that the impending criſis may paſs away without any great concuſſion of our Monarchy, and without abſolute ruin to Public Liberty.

Having theſe gloomy apprehenſions full in my views I heard with pleaſure from your Lordſhip that the late Directory of France was underſtood to be well inclined to Peace. But the hopes conceived from this favourable circumſtance were but of ſhort duration. Suddenly came the intelligence that the Directorial Government was at an end, and that of Buonaparte was eſtabliſhed in its ſtead. I lament this violent aſſumption of power. However ably the Great French Conſul may conduct the affairs of his Country, he has diſgraced his character by violating its Repreſentative Aſſembly; his uſurpation is a breach of every principle of Freedom, it is injurious to the general Rights of Man, as well as to thoſe of the

French

French Nation. Beſide all this, Peace is farther removed than ever it was by this new Revolution. From the ardour of Buonaparte's character, from his ſpeeches and addreſſes we may expect that he will ſeek Peace through a new train of victories. The pacific ſpirit of Syeyes will yield to the military genius of the Grand Conſul; under ſome loſs of Liberty from his uſurpation of power, and more from the ariſtocratical model of a Legiſlative Repreſentation, introduced by his authority, the French Nation will probably be conſoled by new conqueſts and an increaſe of glory. But England can augur nothing from a War continued by Pitt and Dundas againſt the Military Conſul of France, but defeat and diſgrace; commotion in Ireland, bankruptcy here, and a more rapid tendency to Revolution in every part of the Empire. My only hope that theſe calamities may be prevented reſts principally, and almoſt ſolely on this circumſtance, that ſuch men as Lord Lanſdown, the Duke of Grafton, Mr. Fox, and the Duke of Bedford, do not deſpair of the Public Weal.

I heartily wiſh your Lordſhip every good wiſh of the ſeaſon, and am ever,

My Lord,

Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *13th Feb*, 1800.

My Dear Sir,

I Returned from my medical courſe here on Monday, and take the firſt moment of leiſure to return you thanks for two very kind letters.

I was confined a great part of the time I was at Bath with a ſucceſſion of bad colds, and prevented drinking the waters till the laſt days; when I was much mortified to leave it juſt as I began to find benefit: I propoſe however returning there in Spring.

As far as I can judge of the Public Mind there is but one opinion as to Lord Grenville's letter; but I am ſorry to ſay the opinion is not ſo general upon the great ſubject of War and Peace; more calamities are requiſite to prove the folly, vanity, and madneſs of the War; and more, I have no doubt, will ſpeedily arrive. The Imperial Courts I ſee are already beginning to differ about the ſpoil; and it is impoſſible that our Public will not ſee the folly and ruin attending the profuſion of expence going on for objects which no way concern us. I agree with you in thinking that it is to the Public we muſt look. I hope no good from Oppoſition, as I ſee everyday freſh ſeeds of diſ-union ariſing, as if the ſyſtem was

to break into as many parts as poſſible, inſtead of uniting in one common Cauſe.

In the mean-time the terms which Government hold out to Ireland to procure a Union give me hopes that the precedent of purchaſing the rotten Boroughs muſt become irreſiſtable here, and that the foundation will be laid of a ſure and honourable Reform.

I heartily wiſh you and your family all poſſible health and happineſs, and am always,

Very truly your's,

LANSDOWN.

LETTER XXII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *May 10th*, 1800.

My Lord,

I Had great pleaſure from obſerving in the account of Parliamentary proceedings laſt week, that your Lordſhip had attended the Houſe of Lords on the conſideration of the Union propoſed to Ireland. Your appearance in that Houſe on a day of debate, is a proof I hope that your health has been perfectly reeſtabliſhed by the Bath Waters, and that a ſecond viſit, which it was your intention to make there about this time, is not thought neceſſary. I truſt your Lordſhip needs no aſſurance how

how ſincerely I ſhall rejoice to hear it both on your account perſonally, and on that of our diſtreſſed and endangered Country, which in my apprehenſion is verging to its ruin with increaſed rapidity.

In the debate alluded to, it was matter of conſolation to me to find your Lordſhip ſo ſeaſonably ſupporting the doctrine of Political Reformation, and concurring with Lord Holland in his juſt and liberal ideas of toleration. Theſe are ſubjects on which my mind has long been made up in a very near conformity, I believe, with your ſentiments. And I am more than ever convinced, after having conſidered Mr. Pitt's recent declaration *againſt Reform*, and his artful, but fallacious reaſons for *evading* any *ſpecific promiſe of toleration*, that for the internal happineſs of this Country, and of Ireland, it is neceſſary that a ſubſtantial Redreſs of Grievances in theſe reſpects ſhould be granted; and the ſooner it is done the better for both Countries. With reſpect to the intended Union with Ireland, I muſt fairly own my mind is not without a pretty ſtrong feeling of difficulty. I do indeed concur moſt completely with your Lordſhip in wiſhing the propoſal could be rendered agreeable to Ireland, ſo as to be accepted with the good will and free conſent of the People of that Country. Our ancient rivals have acquired in the Netherlands and Weſtern Germany an extent of territory which muſt render France more than ever formidable to Great-Britain. And ſince it is evident that all the efforts of our Cabinet

to wreſt that territory from France are moſt likely to be defeated, and if continued a little longer to exhauſt this Country, and perhaps throw Ireland afreſh into a ſtate of commotion, it muſt be admitted I think to be good policy to endeavour to conſolidate the power of the Britiſh Empire by ſuch a Union as that which has been propoſed. It is indeed a meaſure called for by the moſt imperious neceſſity. The other dominions of this Empire are too diſtant, too widely ſeparated to admit an union. They muſt remain ill compacted and liable to diſmemberment. Ireland alone can be united with Britain. Our enemies ſee their intereſt to prevent it, and with augmented ſtrength are ſtraining every nerve to ſever the tie which connects the Siſter Kingdoms, and by daſhing each Country in hoſtile concuſſion againſt the other, to effect the ruin of both. At the preſent ſtormy criſis we may adopt the motto of the Dutch Provinces in the hour of their diſtreſs: ſenſible of their danger from the ill-connected frame of their Government, they exclaimed, "Frangimur ſi Collidimur."

Our danger from diſcord, and that collition which is to be dreaded from the continuance of our ſeparate Parliaments, is equally great; and an incorporating Union ſeems beſt calculated to prevent it. But then it muſt be an incorporation freely conſented to by the Siſter Kingdom; for without that, the meaſure of an Union cannot be conſiſtent with juſtice, or even, I fear, with ſound policy. I am little acquainted with the ſentiments of Iriſhmen; by any other information I mean than

than what the Public poſſeſſes. But the appearances are ſuch as to make me fearful we have not yet obtained that national conſent of Ireland to the meaſure which alone can add ſtrength and ſtability to the Britiſh Empire. After martial law has been proclaimed in that Country, and ſixty Members of their Houſe of Commons have been diſplaced, and ſucceeded by men more pliant to the views of Government, I ſee the meaſure is carried through the Iriſh Parliament; but I ſee the Iriſh Counties and many of their towns renew their Petitions againſt it; and the only meaſure which would in a clear Conſtitutional manner aſcertain on which ſide the ſenſe of the Public is, has been unfortunately refuſed. I therefore am apprehenſive that all is not right in the conduct of this meaſure, and that the conſequences of it, if carried through againſt the opinion of ſo large a part of the Iriſh Nation as have appeared againſt it, will not be finally beneficial. Happy ſhould I be to hear from your Lordſhip that my fears are groundleſs, and that you have reaſon to think the Body of the People of Ireland are well reconciled to the meaſure, which, prejudice and paſſion laid aſide, is intitled I think to their approbation, and that of England too. Its effects on Engliſh Liberty I would not inſiſt on as an objection that ought to prevail againſt its adoption. It would indeed increaſe the influence of the Crown. But were the united Parliament properly choſen, and the lucrative patronage of the Crown to a certain extent diminiſhed, that influence would find in

Parliament a ſufficient countervailing power; the exceſſes of Adminiſtration would be controuled effectually by the ſenſe and regular influence of the Public, and our rights and happineſs would be completely ſecured. To this ſtate of freedom and happineſs Reform alone can reſtore us. Reform will be neceſſary, whether we unite with Ireland, or, by refuſing the Union, riſque the evils of ſeparation. And Reform I think will be in no degree leſs attainable after Union than before: rather perhaps the contrary, from what your Lordſhip juſtly remarked as a favourable precedent for it, which will be created by the Union, viz. the extinction of the rotten Boroughs of Ireland on the principle of purchaſe.

Upon the whole, I fear that the conſent of the Iriſh Parliament has not been obtained by warrantable means; and I apprehend alſo that Miniſters have not procured the conſent of the Iriſh Nation, and cannot, or will not find the means to procure it. If ever a dereliction of principle could be right, it would be in the caſe of ſuch a Country as Ireland; in which the whole Government in Church and State is one vaſt anomaly, and every eſtabliſhment is a contradiction to theory. But I cannot ſee grounds to juſtify the Union in what forms the defect of the preſent ſyſtem in Ireland. The Union ought to correct that great defect; and it would completely correct it, if the conſent of the Iriſh people were previouſly obtained. If the Engliſh Cabinet were occupied by your Lordſhip, Mr. Fox, and your reſpective friends, I ſhould not deſpair that your equitable

equitable principles of toleration, and firm attachment to Popular Rights would in a ſhort time remove the greateſt, and only with me inſuperable objection to this meaſure. But the preſent Miniſter is too eager, too impatient to brook contradiction or delay; and a meaſure wiſe in itſelf, and become neceſſary to ſuſtain the Empire againſt the mighty power of the French Republic, ſeems but too likely to be marred by the pride and precipitation of the man who has propoſed it.

Such are my preſent ſentiments on this great queſtion. In the main they nearly accord with your Lordſhip's opinion. And you have accuſtomed me ſo much by your kind partiality to explain myſelf to you on public meaſures, even when there may be ſome conſiderable diverſity of ſentiment, that I ſhould feel myſelf acting with a blameable diffidence of your Lordſhip's candour and good opinion, which I have ſo often experienced, if I omitted to do ſo on this occaſion.

I remain with high regard,

My Lord,

Your faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. I am totally unacquainted with Mr. Fox's ſentiments on the queſtion whether Union with Ireland is or is not deſirable, provided the conſent of the Iriſh Nation could be obtained? But if power were intruſted to the hands of the preſent opponents of Mr. Pitt, and it were their wiſh to complete the Union with the conſent of the Iriſh People fairly obtained,

I think their well-known attachment to Liberty and their enlarged principles of toleration would enable them to remove thoſe difficulties which are inſurmountable to him. Had he been as free from the influence of High-Church prejudices as your Lordſhip and his other opponents are, there is little reaſon to ſuppoſe he could not have procured the concurrence of the Iriſh Catholics.

LETTER XXIII.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BATH, 18*th May*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

THE Iriſh Union is a great event, and muſt prove a happy one, if it was for nothing but the blow which it gives the Borough ſyſtem. With ſuch a precedent I flatter myſelf that in a few years we may ſee a good municipal Government eſtabliſhed in all parts, and our Legiſlature corrected, if not perfected. As to the conſent of the People of Ireland, I am aſſured *here*, from reſpectable authority, that in the North of Ireland, where alone a public opinion is to be looked for, a great majority is convinced that it is a *neceſſary evil*. In the mean-time, it cannot be expected that what is called the Proteſtant Aſcendancy will quietly ſurrender the ſcandalous monopoly it has

has ſo long enjoyed of power as well as property, without making every poſſible effort to retain it, in which habit will make them be aſſiſted by an ignorant multitude without property or inſtruction. I am aſtoniſhed that nnder ſuch circumſtances the Oppoſition is not more general and more determined, which I can attribute only to the great good ſenſe and good temper of Lord Cornwallis. In the meantime I conceive that the Friends of Reform here have nothing to do but to ſtand firm upon the precedent now eſtabliſhed, and upon the conviction, which I find pretty general, that the Houſe of Commons will be too numerous, and that a reduction of the number will be indiſpenſible, which muſt of itſelf produce a Reform.

I am ſhocked to hear the account of the diſtreſs prevailing in London for abſolute want of food, and that it is more likely to increaſe than leſſen, owing to a great deal of the corn which is arrived being damaged, and the doubt regarding further ſupplies. What a pity it is that Government cannot be brought to conſent to a General Incloſure Bill, and other meaſures for the advancement of Agriculture. The only good news that I hear is that we have not ſigned any Definitive Treaty with Auſtria; thanks to the Auſtrians, not to ourſelves; for we have ſought it by every poſſible means.

As to toleration, I read a very ſingular paper, ſigned Curſitor, addreſſed to the Biſhop of Lincoln, in a Sunday's Review, a week or two ſince. I came here in November to get the gout;

gout; and I am now come to get rid of it, which I ſhould have accompliſhed if it had not been for the trying weather which has prevailed. I am much obliged by the intereſt you take about my health, feeling as I do the ſame for your's, and for your family's.

No one is more truly

Your faithful humble ſervant,

LANSDOWN.

LETTER XXIV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 22d*, 1801.

My Lord,

IT gave me the greateſt pleaſure to hear your Lordſhip's opinion, that the motion for a Meeting of this County was proper, well timed, and likely to do good. I am much mortified, however, to be obliged now to communicate the unwelcome intelligence that the buſineſs is at a ſtand, and there is no probability that it will be got forward.

The firſt Requiſition for a Previous Meeting was ſtopt by the Gentlemen of the Weſt, under an expectation of gaining friends among the new Converts to Peace. The ſecond Requiſition directly to the Sheriff, which was ſubſtituted in lieu of the firſt at the ſuggeſtion of thoſe Gentlemen, has ſince been ſtopt, in

cnſequence

conſequence of a report that the new Miniſters are willing, not only to negociate with France, but to conclude a Peace on the moſt humiliating terms which the Nation will ſubmit to.

After the King's Speech, and Lord Grenville's Declaration in the Houſe of Lords, ſuch a report ought only to be conſidered as an idle rumour, intitled to no credit. But our weſtern friends conſider it more ſeriouſly, and have conſequently reſolved to ſuſpend their proceedings, till the new Miniſterial ſyſtem repecting Peace is opened out.

I conclude that the preſent opportunity for a declaration of the public ſenſe will probably be loſt in Yorkſhire. But ſo great are the diſtreſs and danger of the Country, that a proper opportunity for General Meetings cannot long be wanting *. I am ſure your Lordſhip, as a conſtant and uniform friend of Peace, will regret, as I do, that ſo fair a proſpect of now obtaining a general declaration againſt the continuance and extenſion of the War, is likely to be loſt, at leaſt in this County, by the indeciſion and fluctuating meaſures of ſome very worthy Gentlemen in the Weſt.

I have the hononr to be,
My Lord,
With high regard,
Your faithful ſervant,
C. WYVILL.

* This was ſaid on the ſuppoſition, at that time probable, that the War would be continued by the new Adminiſtration.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

BURTON-HALL, *June 29th*, 1801.

My Lord,

I CANNOT ſend your Lordſhip the inclоſed printed letter to Major Cartwright without a few lines to explain that this 2d Edition contains an additional paſſage of ſome pages to illuſtrate and inforce the objections to Univerſal Suffrage in ſuch a Country as this, which are briefly ſtated, or rather hinted in the firſt. In thus endeavouring, however feebly, to put the Defence of Liberty on principles which at the ſame time would afford a due protection to Property, I feel I am acting as your Lordſhip has long acted, and therefore ſlight as this production is, I truſt its deſign will receive the ſanction of your approbation. I hope your Lordſhip enjoys a more confirmed ſtate of good health than you did ſome years ago. And I ſincerely wiſh it, not only from motives of private eſteem and regard, but for the ſake of our diſtreſſed Country, which can only look for its deliverance to your Lordſhip, and the other wiſe and virtuous Stateſmen who co-operate with you.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your moſt faithful ſervant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

From the MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN *to the* Rev. C. WYVILL.

BOWOOD PARK, *16th July*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I Perfectly agree with you in thinking "that it is of great importance to the Public that a national oppoſition to the meaſures, &c. ſhould be formed;" but the queſtion is, how is it to be done? I am ſure there is no proſpect of any ſuch thing in theſe parts, if it does not come from the North.

As to Reform, I am very ſure, after having conſidered the ſubject all my life, that Liberty can never be ſecured by numbers; they only ſerve to leſſen reſponſibility, and to cover corruption.

I am very much ſhocked to hear that we are to look to new coalitions, and to farther War; nor can I foreſee the conſequences.

I am much obliged to you for your kind expreſſions about my health. It is conſiderably improved: I hope you and your family have no reaſon to complain.

I am, with much eſteem,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble ſervant,

LANSDOWN.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the* MARQUIS *of* LANSDOWN.

53, DEAN-STREET, SOHO, *April 25th*, 1803.

My Lord,

I Feel myſelf already ſo much obliged by your conſenting to the publication of ſome ſelected letters written by your Lordſhip to myſelf, that I ought to be cautious of treſpaſſing farther upon your goodneſs. Yet for the ſake of the Public I cannot but regret that a certain Paper, containing your Lordſhip's thoughts on the beſt mode of effecting a moderate Reform of Parliament, has been miſlaid, and could not be found among your Papers in Berkley Square before you left London. Diſcontent, perhaps, has always exiſted in ſome degree among the lower claſſes of the People; but the almoſt intolerable preſſure of taxes, and the harſh meaſures of Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration, during the latter part of it, appear to have provoked the People more extenſively, and much more dangerouſly than they ever were provoked by any former Miniſtry ſince the expulſion of James the IId. Such being the temper of a conſiderable part of the People, eſpecially in this Capital, at a criſis when we are threatened with a new War, either immediately, or as ſoon as the Chief Conſul can re-eſtabliſh a Navy, I cannot but apprehend that a Revolution in this Country is a calamity which men not younger than you, my Lord, or myſelf, may

may have the misfortune to witneſs. In the event of a National Bankruptcy, and perhaps in ſome other very poſſible events, that terrible calamity would be unavoidable, unleſs ſomething had previouſly been done to reſtore the confidence of the Public in the integrity of Parliament; and unleſs to that confidence the zeal and generous enthuſiaſm were added which the People can never feel as they ought while Popular Rights are in a ſtate of oppreſſion or inſecurity. That previous Reform which I have alluded to, ſeems therefore to be a meaſure of the utmoſt moment to the Public; I mean that it may be effected on moderate principles before any great National concuſſion may agitate the mind of the Public too deeply, and general diſcontent may be exaſperated to diſaffection and revolutionary rage. And I ſhould therefore conſider the publication of your Lordſhip's ſentiments on the beſt and moſt feaſable plan for effecting a moderate Reform, to be highly deſirable, as the tendency of ſuch a publication would be very much to facilitate the ſucceſs of ſuch a Reform; *not now indeed*, when the majority of the more opulent claſſes ſeem blind to the means of averting the danger which they dread; but certainly *at that time*, which cannot be far diſtant, when another great War with France ſhall have produced ſtill more ſevere diſtreſs, and more threatening appearances of public diſcontent than we have yet beheld *.

On

* The Editor underſtood from Lord Lanſdown, on his return to London, in May, 1803, that he had not been able to find the Paper

On this account, my Lord, I hope you will have the goodneſs to excuſe my ſuggeſting a wiſh that, on looking among your Papers at Bowood, you may be able to find the Piece in queſtion; though, after all, I believe I hardly ſhould have ventured to trouble your Lordſhip in ſearching for it, if you had not yourſelf intimated a deſign to make another attempt to find it.

I moſt ſincerely wiſh the Bath Waters may have had their uſual good effect to the full upon your health, and that I may have the pleaſure to ſee your Lordſhip on your return to Town in May, at leaſt as ſtout and well as when you left it. I am ever,

My Lord,
With high regard,
Your's moſt faithfully,
C. WYVILL.

Paper in queſtion. After that time his declining ſtate of health, to his death in 1805, rendered it improper to trouble Lord Lanſdown with any farther mention of that Paper. In the Editor's various converſations with Lord Lanſdown on the ſubject of Political Reform, his Lordſhip's ſentiments reſpecting the beſt mode for effecting it were never explained. In ſome of the preceding letters written by him, particularly the 10th of this ſeries, dated January 23d, 1798, it is intimated that he had formed an opinion peculiar to himſelf upon that ſubject; and that opinion probably was ſtated diſtinctly, and in detail in the Paper ſo often alluded to. But now, when the predicted ſtorm ſeems to be gathering round us, the faithful and able Pilot is loſt to the Nation, and with him the intended legacy of his parting advice. The peculiar principle which Lord Lanſdown approved, as moſt likely to produce *a ſure and honourable Reform*, in all probability will remain a ſecret, and will be the ſubject of uncertain conjecture.

NUMBER

PART II.

CONTAINING NUMBER XXX.

NUMBER XXX.

Containing the EDITOR'S *Correspondence with the Hon.* CHARLES JAMES FOX.

LETTER I.

From the REV. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* CHARLES JAMES FOX.

BURTON HALL, near Bedale, *May 29th*, 1797.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your consideration the inclosed requisition, and List of Signatures annexed. Respecting the list I would beg leave to observe, that between thirty and forty of the names subscribed are *new names*; that is, they are the names of persons who, in 1795, were either inactive, or both active and hostile to our cause. I have marked them with a cross. It is also material to remark, that the list consists, for the greatest part, of gentlemen of landed estates in the North-riding; our friends in other parts having been too much dispirited by the defeat, in 1795, to come forward on this occasion. Respecting the disposition of the country, it is impossible to speak with precision; but I judge it to stand nearly thus: a great proportion of the mercantile interest is adverse to the principles of liberty; and partly from mercenary motives,

more from the excess of high church bigotry are devoted to the present minister, and probably would continue so, even if he should be suffered to complete the ruin of the country. A considerable body of the landed gentlemen are still attached to him, but his hold on their minds is far from being firm. On the contrary side, we reckon a small minority of the manufacturers and merchants, very respectable for character, and firm in their attachment to the principles of liberty, but a good deal dispirited by the great superiority of their adversaries, especially in the trading towns; a majority probably of the landed gentlemen, almost all the smaller freeholders, and the shop-keepers, with few exceptions. A previous meeting of gentlemen friendly to the requisition is intended to be held on Tuesday the 6th of June. At that meeting, it is by no means my intention to advise an immediate tender of the requisition to the sheriff. When I engaged in this business, I foresaw various difficulties, particularly from the uncertain issue of the pending negociation; and for this and other reasons, the requisition was drawn up in general terms. The overture which has been made has, however, been the means of collecting together a considerable body of the landed gentlemen of this part of Yorkshire, with a few more of great respectability in the other two districts. My wish is, that on the 6th of June they may adjourn to some day near the end of July, or the beginning of August, then to consider the expediency of bringing forward the

the requisition. And I conceive, that if at that time negociation shall be over, and the continuance of the war shall be ascertained, we may safely proceed to the sheriff with our requisition. We shall indeed be violently opposed by the majority of the Leeds merchants; but, thus circumstanced, we shall have the general sense of the landed interest with us; and none, or very few but the immediate dependents of the merchants, the retainers of ministry, and the personal friends of the two county members, will appear in opposition to us. But when I consider the prospect as thus encouraging in Yorkshire, in case the war should be continued, I beg to be thus understood, viz. I think it necessary that some strong encouraging declaration, and better still if accompanied with their signatures to the requisition, should be sent down by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Thanet, the Duke of Northumberland, and as many of the other Yorkshire nobility as may be of similar sentiments, to be produced to the meeting on the 6th of June. They should engage to give their active support, and, if possible, their personal attendance at the proposed county meeting. That is the sort of declaration I mean; which, with their signatures to be brought forward, in the event of a failure in the negociation for peace, and the consequent resolution of a second meeting of our friends in July or August, to tender the requisition to the sheriff, I think would sufficiently encourage our friends, and enable us

to make the proposed movement with a fair probability of success. But unless active and personal assistance may be relied on from the peers and other powerful persons, who are generous enough to side with you in supporting the cause of civil and religious liberty, I fear it will be long before it will be possible to make any head against our opponents.

I have just written to the peers named in this letter, and some others; I consider their active support as so essential, that without it the present overture will most probably fail; but with that assistance, and in the circumstance of a certain continuance of the war, I think a meeting of the county of York may be resolved on, not only without hazard to the public cause, but with great advantage to it. And after having written to the peers alluded to, I thought it right to state these circumstances to you, and even to trouble you with my opinion upon them; considering your interference with our noble friends to be the only effectual means of bringing them *generally* to the resolution, which seems absolutely necessary, to put the popular cause upon a respectable footing in Yorkshire; and at the same time to guard against the too probable excesses of popular zeal, if left to itself, from the neglect of their natural leaders to place themselves at the head of respectable bodies of men, united in the support of the public cause.

And I trust, Sir, for these reasons you will have

have the goodness to excuse my having trespassed so much upon your time; and to believe that

I am, with high respect,
Your most faithful and obedient servant,
C. WYVILL.*

* The preceding volumes of this collection contain the letters which form the editor's public correspondence with the Hon. C. J. Fox, during the struggle for peace and reform, which the American war, and the consequent increase of the power of the crown, at last produced. From the year 1786, in which the Yorkshire Committee was virtually dissolved, to the year 1797, no fit opportunity had presented itself for renewing the struggle for reform in that county. In 1795, numerous meetings of the people, in and near the capital, had been held indeed, and by them the redress of political grievances had been loudly demanded. But those meetings were, for the most part, assemblages of the inferior citizens; and by them too much heat was manifested to encourage the counties to concur with their measures. In Yorkshire, particularly, the proceedings alluded to increased the disgust and apprehension of violent innovations which had been before excited. Undoubtedly, if riots in the capital had been or might be the consequence of such great assemblies of the people, the law had provided means for their suppression, which would have been found sufficient. But the minister preferred other means for the restraint of popular excesses more suitable to his character and views. He proposed a bill to parliament which went to nothing less than to infringe the Declaration of Rights passed by the King and Parliament at the Revolution, which was in effect the foundation on which the new dynasty rested their title to the throne, and which the nation justly considered to be the bulwark of our freedom. Yet such was the panic fear, which the rashness of those meetings had spread through the country, that this pernicious measure met with no general opposition; or none sufficiently powerful to prevent its adoption by the legislature. In Yorkshire an effort was made to animate the freeholders to defend the ancient limits of the constitution, but it was made in vain.—In less than two years, however, the sentiments of the public underwent a material change. The war with France had been begun in a paroxysm of passion; misconduct and misfortune had marked its progress; and it was then continued with no rational prospect of success. At last the nation grew weary of a contest, in which increasing distress was to be endured, for no definite and highly important object, for no cause equal to the sacrifice of general comfort. When the war became unpopular, corruption again became odious, and the delusions, which had been too long the support of the new system of administration, lost their influence, at least, in a considerable degree. In May 1797, appearances induced the editor to hope that the time

LETTER II.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for your letter, which I have this day received, together with the list of the gentlemen who have signed the requisition. I have done all in my power to persuade the Duke of Norfolk to take an active part, and I have little doubt but he will do so by and bye, though I question whether at present he will put his name to the requisition. Of the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Thanet making every exertion

was, or soon would be arrived, when the interference of the counties might be successfully called forth, the return of peace might be accelerated, the integrity of the Bill of Rights might be restored, and some additional security to national freedom possibly might be obtained. Under this impression, at a crisis of great impending danger, he felt it to be his duty to apply once more to his former associates, and endeavour to re-unite them with other not less distinguished friends of their country, on principles exactly similar to those which in 1780 the county of York had supported with strenuous zeal. When he meditated this enterprise, and considered the difficulties which would attend it, and the best means to overcome them, it soon occurred to him, that the most important assistance could be given by Mr. Fox, and that the communication of his views probably would procure it. Yet, before the resolution was taken to write this letter, the editor felt some hesitation. In the year 1780, on his mission to the General Deputation, in London, he had indeed the honour to be personally known to Mr. Fox; but, at the appointment of deputies, circumstances had arisen in Yorkshire which necessarily kept the editor at a distance from any intimate connection with him. A prior engagement to his associates forbade him to look that way; and, combined with other circumstances, naturally led him to his subsequent connection with Mr. Pitt. During the continuance of it, he had neither conversed nor corresponded with Mr. Fox. In 1793, that connection was discontinued, for reasons which have been already

ertion in their power I have no doubt, and I dare say they have both already answered the letters you have written to them, to that effect. Lord Thanet will, I doubt not, go down if the county meeting takes place; which cannot be expected or desired of the Duke of Northumberland in his

already declared. But still no epistolary correspondence * or personal intercourse with Mr. Fox had taken place, before the date of this letter. In the mean time Mr. Fox had much increased his claim to the gratitude of his countrymen, by his opposition to the enslaving doctrines of Mr. Burke. Against the assault of his inconsistent associate, he had defended the principles of liberty in parliamentary debate. The declining cause of his fellow-men he had maintained victoriously, but he had lost with his passionate friend, a large proportion of his noble adherents. From that time Mr. Fox constantly had been the advocate of peace, the defender of popular rights, and the promoter of a just but moderate correction of our political abuses. The editor's confidence in Mr. Fox, as a statesman whose wisdom and whose benevolence alike prompted him thus to support the true interest of his country, was then complete. He felt the strongest conviction, that, as far as might be practicable, Mr. Fox would continue to urge the return of peace, the re-establishment of our violated rights, and the concession of fresh securities to national freedom; and he trusted, that in the opinion of this patriot-statesman, the crisis would justify or excuse the application.

On these grounds, and with the hope of thus obtaining a more extended co-operation, this first letter to Mr. Fox was addressed by the editor. His answer, and the whole series of his subsequent letters, are here submitted to the inspection of the public, with the consent of Mr. Fox, given after a re-perusal of them in 1804, with that frank generosity which forms the prominent feature of his character.—How much the editor considers himself to be indebted for this obliging compliance, or how highly he values the various proofs of his esteem and regard, which, in the course of their correspondence, he received from this illustrious statesman, he will not attempt to express. He will only offer him his thanks, and to the assurance of his grateful sensibility, add his most sincere and ardent wish, that final success may crown his labours for the liberty and happiness of his countrymen, and for the general welfare of Europe.

* These minute particularities are thus anxiously introduced by the editor, to demonstrate the truth of his assertion to Mr. Mason, in his letter dated July 19, 1794. See the fifth volume of Political Papers, Number 6, Letter 26.

state of health. I think the plan of delay very judicious, as by that means the business may be kept alive, without coming to a decision at a moment when, in the opinion of many of our friends, there is so much danger of defeat. A few weeks may produce many events which may encourage our friends to appear, and much more discourage the enemy. The Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Leeds, Lord Fitzwilliam, and even Lord Carlisle, are, I believe, all of them completely dissatisfied with the present ministry; though I am afraid still far from agreeing with you or me on some very essential points; and I should not be surprised if some of these were to come so far round, between this time and August, as to support a petition for the dismission of ministers. And probably by that time those who are determined (upon what pretence I know not) to believe that a negociation is now going on for peace, will be satisfied upon that head.

I am much obliged to you for your information in regard to the state of Yorkshire, which coincides nearly with the other accounts I have received of your county. The perseverance of the commercial interest in the West Riding, has a terrible effect in discouraging our friends, and none more than the Duke of Norfolk, whose interest, I understand, lies chiefly in that district*; but nothing

* From his connection with the West Riding of Yorkshire, by his extensive estates in Sheffield, and its neighbourhood, the Duke of Norfolk probably formed his sentiments of the disposition

nothing shall be wanting, on my part, to incite him to activity. Lord Petre told me, some time since, that he had already written to his agents to support the requisition; and, though he, any more than the Duke of Northumberland, is not in a state of health to go down, I have no doubt but he will do any thing else that you wish.

If at any time any thing occurs to you, in which I can be of service, pray do me the favour to write to me. And believe me, with great regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *1st June.*

LETTER III.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *June 9th*, 1797.

Sir,

I HAVE great pleasure in assuring you, and I take the earliest opportunity to do it, after my return from the meeting, that our affairs are now in a good posture in Yorkshire. The meeting, on the 6th of June, consisted of above sixty gentlemen; and

tion of the Yorkshire gentlemen more unfavourably than he would have done, if he had been more connected with the other districts of that county.

though

though there was some aukward debating at first, yet that was got over, and the gentlemen came unanimously to the resolution to state reasons for disapproving the present ministers; which were in substance the same as those I offered to the meeting, except that what related to Ireland in my propositions was omitted. They have adjourned to the assize week, then to determine the question, to tender the requisition to the high sheriff? and if peace should not be obtained, or it should not be ascertained at least, that it will be obtained soon, there will, I am confident, be no hesitation to send the requisition to the sheriff; and we may look forward to the event of a county meeting with a great probability of success. Still, however, it must be understood, that I venture to state this good prospect as existing only under a supposition of support from the Duke of Norfolk, and the other peers, &c. as stated in a former letter.

I am happy to add, that Earl Thanet and the Duke of Northumberland have given their signatures to the requisition.

I have the honour to be,
With high respect,
Sir,
Your most faithful servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 12*th*, 1798.

Sir,

ON the 1st of January current, I transmitted to you a copy of the resolutions * agreed to that day, by a meeting of gentlemen friendly to the proposed requisition to the sheriff to call a meeting of this county. I trust you would find in the resolutions sentiments which you could approve, uttered in a tone of firmness and determination which marks the increasing vigour of our friends. It is material to observe, that those sentiments were unanimously adopted by a meeting of about fifty gentlemen, of whom many never had attended before, and several were new converts from our opponents. Since the resolutions were passed, the opinion of the county, as far as I have hitherto been able to collect it, appears to be favourable to us; and I have very recently heard of some considerable accession of strength, in this part of Yorkshire, from the entire conversion of gentlemen and independent yeomen, lately hostile to our cause. A more rapid change of opinion has never fallen under my observation; and as the cause which has produced that change, viz.

* Of these Resolutions no copy has been preserved by the Editor.

the

the great pressure of taxes, is sure to operate with increasing force, I think we may rely on having a more animated support in Feburary, at our fourth requisition meeting; and a still greater and more effectual increase of strength at a county meeting early in March. By a longer delay, it is probable, we might acquire more strength; but the 7th of February was pressed upon the gentlemen, as the day for their fourth meeting, with a view to the calling of a county meeting the first week of March, for reasons which I beg leave to state to you.

1. Conceiving the current of popular opinion to be decidedly turned against the administration, I think the party for peace and reform should avail themselves of the change by a general and well-combined movement; the mariner sets sail when the tide is in his favour, and thus makes the most expeditious advance.

2. By the beginning of March it seems practicable to bring forward the whole body of our friends, or in a few weeks after that time; and if the effort should prove successful, and a change of men and measures should take place before the usual season for military operations, it is possible, that the opening of another campaign might be prevented, and a great part of our danger might be averted. And if the effort should unfortunately fail, I own, I cannot see that the failure of this attempt would place us in a worse situation than that we should be in, if we remained inactive.

3. I fear

3. I fear the triple tax cannot be collected without force in the country; and in London non-payment in many cases, and, in many more, absolute resistance to the collection, may be apprehended; the consequence of which will probably be such a scene of general uproar and confusion, as would, for some time at least, render popular meetings unadvisable, particularly in London. So that if the opportunity of a general movement between this time and the beginning of April, should be neglected, no other is likely to offer itself, before the sense of unendurable grievance will have produced that terrible crisis of popular frenzy, in which even your powerful and meritorious exertions would be unavailing to prevent a civil war, and yet preserve the freedom of your country.

Such were the views which induced me to press the Yorkshire gentlemen, on the 1st of January, to come to an early decision of the question respecting a county meeting, which some of my friends, whom I highly respect, were rather inclined to postpone to an indefinite time. I almost flatter myself, that you will approve these reasons; and if I am so fortunate as to find *that* is the fact, your approbation will determine me to persevere in the plan; which, however, I shall readily abandon, if you see great objections to it; and giving up the long pending requisition, I shall concur, on the 7th of February, with those gentlemen who may wish to adjourn *sine die*.

I will only beg at present to trouble you with

with one observation more, which is this—if you think the opportunity for a general movement ought not to be lost, it will be of great importance in Yorkshire, that we have the active assistance, and, as far as possible, the personal attendance at the county meeting of all the peers and commoners of large property, who agree with us in sentiments. This I formerly took the liberty to state to you; and I now think that unless all, or nearly all, the persons alluded to, will thus co-operate with the gentlemen who have attended those previous meetings, it is unlikely that a meeting of the county of York can be held with advantage, or will be attempted in February. But if nearly all the peers and gentlemen alluded to will send their signatures to the requsition, to be laid before the meeting on the 7th of February, and will promise attendance at the county meeting, my opinion is, that we shall be victorious, though not without a severe struggle.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
With high respect,
Your most faithful humble servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER V.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Sir,

I RECEIVED a week ago your obliging letter of the 12th instant, but as the point upon which you ask my opinion is of great importance, I wished to defer answering it, till I could consult some persons whose opinions upon a business of this nature appeared to me of great consequence.

I have the satisfaction to find, that all those whom I have consulted, agree exactly with me, both in approving what has been done at York, and in thinking it right to go forward if there is a reasonable prospect of success; how far there is, or is not, such a prospect, is a matter upon which, at this distance, it is next to impossible to form any judgment. Upon this head, however, I am sorry to say, that when I last saw the Duke of Norfolk, his Grace was of opinion, that little or no alteration had taken place in the manufacturing and populous districts of the West Riding; and I am much afraid, that his opinion upon this subject will make him, if not wholly inactive, at least, far less strenuous in his exertions than he would otherwise be. However, you may depend upon my saying every thing to him upon the matter, that can induce him to come forward.

I think it the more material that something

(always supposing a reasonable prospect of success) should be attempted in your county, because I am pretty sure there are several other counties in the north, who would follow your lead, but where it is thought that to stir without Yorkshire, would answer no important purpose.

I have no great fear in this part of the world of any resistance to the tax, unless inability to pay can be called resistance; but still I perfectly agree with you, in seeing many weighty reasons why the efforts of those who wish to give the country *one* chance for salvation, ought not to be postponed.

I have no doubt but the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Thanet will renew their signatures; but if by any accident they should omit it, I should *think** there could be no objection of availing yourselves of their former signatures, where as in this case, there is no reason for suspecting any change of sentiments.

I am, with great regard,
Sir,
Your most obedient
and most humble servant,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Jan.* 22.

* The Editor has here supplied the word which is printed in italics.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 29, 1798.

Sir,

I AM very happy to find from your favour of the 22d instant, that what has been done at York is approved by you, and by such of your friends as you have had an opportunity of consulting. From what you mention of the Duke of Norfolk, I fear, we have not much to hope from his Grace at present. To his reserve, the continued timorousness of many well-wishers in the West of Yorkshire may be imputed, in a great measure; they have been brow-beaten severely at Leeds and Wakefield, and, without some extraordinary assistance held out to them, they will not easily recover their courage. Yet so great is the increase of zeal and numbers on our side in the North-Riding, that I am not inclined to think that the enterprise of taking the sense of this county will be abandoned on the 7th of February, if you are able to give assurance of support, from the other noblemen and gentlemen, or most of them; and that support to be given not languidly, and by letter only, but strenuously, and at the scene of action, by those who can attend. It is even possible the attempt may be made, though you should be unable to communicate any such assur-

ance; so strongly does this part of the county incline that way, and so much do they despise the mean and mercenary motives, by which many of their violent opponents at Leeds are suspected to be biassed. The wishes of the middle and lower classes are clearly with us; and, deserted by them, the commercial aristocracy of Leeds would cease to be formidable. This is language of more encouragement than I was able to hold some weeks ago; yet still it is matter of great uncertainty, what the resolutions on the 7th of February may be. I wish most anxiously for some favourable answers from the peers, and other persons of great property, to whom you mean to apply. I think nothing more is wanting, than some respectable support from them, to render our success nearly certain.

I propose going to York, on Monday the fifth of February, where I hope to have the honour of hearing again from you, should I not receive a letter from you, before I leave Burton.

I am, Sir,
With the greatest truth and zeal,
Your most faithful humble servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER VII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Sir,

I RECEIVED yesterday your letter, and am very glad to hear, that in one part of the country there seems to be so good a spirit as you describe in the North-Riding; but I am told the accounts from the West-Riding are exceedingly bad. Whether the dismissal of their Lord Lieutenant, on account of his having spoken of the sovereignty of the people, (the only ground that I know upon which the protestant succession can stand) will produce any effect among them, remains to be seen. I am afraid, that I cannot encourage you to hope for much active assistance on Wednesday, from the persons concerning whom you inquire; but if the meeting is called, I have little doubt, but most of them will do all they can to support it. It may be proper to mention that Lord Petre, though very adverse to the ministry and the war, is not yet, I believe, a friend to reform in parliament, though Mr. Howard, and all those most connected with him, are. I hear the Duke of Northumberland was much against calling a Middlesex meeting at present, but I have not heard his reasons, and I suspect his objections were only to the time.

My opinion continues to be, that a meet-

ing will be a desirable measure, if there is a reasonable chance of success; if not, of course there can be but one opinion. The people in this part of the world, (I mean the Metropolis and its environs) I believe are disappointed at not having been better supported through the country, in their opposition to the assessed taxes; but still the spirit is I believe very strong, not only against the ministry, but for reform, and I think it will appear to be so, whenever they see a prospect of acting in concert with other parts of the kingdom, and particularly Yorkshire.

I am, with great regard,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Sunday, February 4, 1798.

LETTER VIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

Sir,

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 31, 1799.

ON Sunday last I transmitted to you a copy of a pamphlet which I have just prepared for publication, in defence of your conduct and your friends, in seceding from parliament. Copies also have been, and will be sent to about twenty of the principal seceders, and also to the Earl of Buchan and the Marquis of Lansdown.

My

My inducement to write this paper was, the prevalence of the idea, in a great body of well-meaning persons, that secession was contrary to the duty of a representative. In this respect, their opinion might be rectified, I hoped, by showing that secession, in some extreme cases, is agreeable to the principles of the constitution. I found, too, that not a few of your warmest friends regretted your conduct, blaming, as hurtful to the common cause, that retirement from parliament, which, coupled as it was with your declaration to your constituents, was to my mind a proof, at once, of the most manly decision and consummate judgment. After having put my thoughts together, nearly in the form in which I hope you have received them, I consulted Mr. Erskine on the point of legality, conceiving in this case, it behoved me to be more than ever cautious not to offend against the laws of our country, not merely from regard to personal security, but from the conviction more especially, that a strict adherence to law afforded the best, perhaps the only, chance of success.

Soon after that, Mr Erskine had the goodness to communicate his opinion, that the pamphlet was unquestionably legal, yet apprising me, that, in times like the present, it was impossible for him to pledge himself to the absolute safety of publication. I had obtained from your most excellent friend the assurance I wished, and immediately ordered

my printer to dispatch the business of the press, with all possible expedition. But before I pass on to the remaining step of publication, it is due to you, Sir, that I pause here, to request, and I hope to receive, your decided opinion on the utility, or inutility of the proposed publication. If my plea rests upon grounds on which you think it ought not to be rested; if my argument for the secession appears to you to be inconclusive, or the general view of your system of policy, which is subsequently held out, is unsatisfactory; or upon the whole, if you apprehend, that this vindication of your conduct, however honestly intended, is more likely to do harm than good, I certainly shall not hesitate, in deference to your superior judgment, to withdraw this piece, at least for the present, and during that state of public affairs in which you judge its appearance unadvisable.

But if your opinion should be, that the publication in question might be useful to the general cause, though you cannot approve every sentiment, or concur in every argument it contains, (which I cannot flatter myself you will) yet in this case, encouraged by your opinion that it might be useful in some degree to publish, I certainly shall send this pamphlet forth, in a short time, not yet exactly fixed.—Most ardently wishing you health and happiness, and final

success

success in the great cause you have so nobly defended.

I remain, Sir,
With the highest respect,
Your most faithful servant,
C. WYVILL.

P. S. I think appearances in Yorkshire are somewhat less unfavourable than they were for some months before. But I forbear to detail them at present. I hope to have an opportunity of conversing with many of our friends, in different parts of the county, some time in spring. The result, as it may then appear to me, I shall not fail to communicate. In the mean time, it is in candour to be confessed that many of my friends despond, though I do not.

LETTER IX.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. WYVILL.

Sir,

I RECEIVED yesterday your obliging letter, for which I return you many thanks. Your vindication of the secession appears to me to put it exactly on the grounds upon which

which it was taken, and is written in such a manner, both in respect to argument, and to propriety of sentiment, that it will give me, and I dare say every other seceder, the greatest satisfaction to see it published.

It gives me particular pleasure, to see that a person of your judgment lays so much stress upon the treason and sedition bills; for I confess, they are the measures which seem to me to have struck the most vitally at the principles of the constitution; but I am afraid, this is far from being a general opinion.

The sort of hatred mixed with contempt, which is, I believe, pretty generally felt against those, whose meetings were the cause, or at least the pretence of those bills, has I fear, made too many acquiesce in them at least, if not approve them. I do not think either of those feelings reasonable, and I am sure both together cannot be so; and least of all, can it be possible that persons or societies whom we consider as despicable, can afford a ground for weakening the general defences of a free constitution.

I am very glad to hear that you do not despond about Yorkshire; but I confess I am much more sure, that without Yorkshire, nothing can be done, than that with it there is much chance of reviving in the country any true spirit of liberty. The city of London, at least, the more wealthy part of it, is the worst of all, and they are so corrupt to the very

very bone, that there can be no hopes from them.

I am, with great truth and regard,
Sir.
Your obedient servant,
C. J. Fox.

St. Anne's Hill, *Monday.*

P. S. I see by the papers, that Mr. Pitt and his friends justify the dismissal of Sir John Parnell, as necessary to evince his sincerity in the measure of the union. Pray what must we think of his sincerity, when he proposed parliamentary reform in 1785, if it is to be tried by this criterion?

LETTER X.

Burton-Hall, *Feb. 14th,* 1799.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Sir,

IT gave me the greatest pleasure to find from your obliging letter, that you approve of my pamphlet, and think the publication of it may be, in some degree, useful to the cause of liberty.

Directions were sent without delay to the printer at York, to distribute a considerable number of copies there, and in the county and a cargo has been sent to London. But there has been a difficulty, and it is not yet got

got over, in procuring a publisher any where. All the booksellers in the country who have been applied to, are too much intimidated to engage in the business, though informed that an able lawyer had been consulted on the point of legality, and had given a favourable opinion. Several of the booksellers in London have also declined; and Mr. Debrett alone has had the courage to undertake the sale, provided, on perusing the pamphlet, he thinks it safe. I am far from blaming the most cautious of these booksellers on this occasion. I mention these circumstances, to show the restricted state of the press at present. And yet ministers think the restraint insufficient, and threaten us with still severer laws. They stifle complaint, and then boast that all are contented, and the nation approves their measures. If Mr. Debrett, after the perusal, should decline publishing, I fear there may be some loss of time, before a decent publisher will be got

I am, Sir,
With the greatest sincerity,
Your faithful servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XI.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for your letter of the 25th ult. The intelligence it contains does

does not much surprise me, as ever since the verdicts against Mr. G. Wakefield's Bookseller, last summer, I have considered the liberty of the press to be virtually annihilated. The only thing that is left us, is the trial by jury, and if ever that shall be found materially inconvenient to our rulers, I am convinced they will find as little difficulty as they will feel scruple in getting rid of that also. The men who can in any state of a country propose such a bill as the Irish Attorney General has brought in, can certainly stop at nothing.

I am, with great regard,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
C. J. FOX.

ST. ANNE'S HILL,
Friday, Mar. 1*st.* 1799.

LETTER XII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *July* 12*th*, 1799.

Sir,

SINCE the return of the spring, I have seen at York, Durham, Newcastle, &c. many gentlemen who are zealous friends to the cause of liberty. And I now sit down with pleasure to perform my promise in a former letter, by communicating to you the information I have received, and my opinion upon the whole.

With

With regard to the general temper of the country, all are agreed in thinking, there never has been a time in the present reign, in which the spirit of the people was sunk so low, as it is at present. The pressure of the taxes is indeed felt with increasing uneasiness, by many classes of men; but the combination of the rich is still so general to support the present system, and they who disapprove it, are still so evidently the minority of that class, that nothing can be done at county-meetings; and the wish to remonstrate, seems almost lost in dispair to effect any good. I understand that at Leeds, Sheffield, &c. trade, in most of its branches, is flourishing; and in the opinion of a great majority of mercantile people in those neighbourhoods, better times were never known; they are amassing fortunes fast, and it is little to them, that liberty is in danger, or the great body of the people distressed.

Among the country gentlemen, a better disposition may be found; several even of the warmest friends of the minister, I am told, have changed their opinions, and are grown weary of the war. Of others, I hear, that they see danger in the continuance of his internal system, apprehend a tendency to revolution, and await that explosion, in anxious suspense, which they think must be the inevitable consequence of the coercive measures which have been for some years adopted. These last are rather inactive, than neutral; their sentiments are nearly our own; and a little patience on our part, with a cautious

abstinence from any measure which is not strictly constitutional in its principle, and plainly pacific in its tendency, will probably win them over to assist the cause we approve. Yet they may be slow to form a decided resolution, and before they have actually joined in any constitutional attempt to preserve the public liberty, both liberty and the constitution may be irrecoverably lost.

This is a danger to which their too jealous hesitation plainly exposes us. But all endeavours to urge men of this dilatory character forward, and to cut short their delays, it is to be feared, might have a contrary effect. The attempt to obtain the interposition of the people, with a view to alter the measures of government, by their influence with parliament, would be imprudent, I believe, till we are reinforced by this class of men. Till we are sure of their concurrence, county meetings would be premature; such men would either absent themselves, or, from renewed apprehensions of the people, join the enemy. This is the opinion of my friends, and I very much concur with them in it. From this statement, it is not very obvious to collect sufficient reasons for hoping, that liberty can be successfully defended in England by the only means we wish to employ, by the use of reason, and pacific appeal in the way of constituton. If it were probable, that ministers would soon make peace with France, by renouncing our acquisitions from Holland, or that by the assistance of Austria and Russia, they could compel her to

acquiesce

acquiesce in our retaining the settlements alluded to, restoring the Stadtholder, &c. I must own, I should be much inclined in either of these cases to despond. But neither of these events seems probable. I therefore think, we ought not to be discouraged by the long delusion of the public, by the little zeal hitherto manifested for a change of system, or by the apparent disregard of those rights of petition and free discussion, which have been infringed or destroyed by the minister; and without which, no other right can long be preserved. It seems impossible to suppose that the English nation has ceased to love that liberty which it understands, and has long enjoyed; for which it has often shed its blood, and which more than once ithas defended in the present reign, with all the vigour of the old English character. It has been alarmed, it has been deluded, and in consequence of that alarm and delusion, artfully managed by the minister, it has borne a taxation, which in other circumstances would have been found intolerable, and the privation of rights, to preserve which, twenty years ago, every risque would have been encountered. But the passion of liberty is not extinct, though for a time it has been suppressed. It will be revived among us by the consequences of the war, I trust, to more energetic exertions than this age and country have witnessed. Events have much falsifyed the minister's calculations, and deranged his plans. When he acceded to the wishes of the court, and commenced his new system, he probably neither

neither expected so long a war, nor to be driven by the opposition of the lower classes to adopt measures of such barefaced tyranny. In this perilous track, he has gone too far to recede. The continued war will not allow him to do that. He must proceed in it, or he must resign. He has made his election, and he will undoubtedly pursue the path he has chosen. His course in it will be marked by the increasing pressure of our burthens, by the harsher and sterner government which will be experienced, and by new invasions of those rights, which give happiness to individuals, and dignity to our country. The natural and necessary consequences of his plan, will be more and more severely felt; and the nation, I trust, will be undeceived, and rouzed to a timely and effectual opposition.

In this consoling conclusion, I am the more ready to rest, because in the American war we were exposed to similar dangers; similar delusions then prevailed, and the lovers of liberty were then reduced to almost equal despondence. And yet, after an acquiescence much too patient, and, in appearance, marking a servile and degraded spirit in the public, a national opposition to the minister's corrupt and dangerous system at length took place, was headed by yourself, and conducted to a successful conclusion. Liberty was at that time saved from impending danger; and I hope, by the same means, and under the conduct of the same leader, it will be saved again, and more completely secured than was possible before.

It is true, that at that time Lord North possessed a less extensive influence than what the present minister has at his command; his abilities were less powerful, and his character less daring and less persevering. They who wish for monarchal aggrandizement have now at their head a chieftain of more formidable power; and one, on whose determined firmness they may more confidently rely. It may be observed, too, that the American revolution was effected by men of humane and moderate characters; by whom those excesses and outrages were wisely avoided, which have since disgraced the revolution of France, and unfortunately injured the cause of liberty in Great Britain. But other variations may be remarked, more favourable to the present defenders of freedom, and they may be thought sufficient to balance those disadvantages. In Lord North's time, the nation was alarmed for liberty, not by any direct violation of its rights, or open breach of the constitution, but by the apprehended consequences and remote tendencies of his system. The reverse, at present, is the case. The administration now is at once corrupt and tyrannical. The daring and haughty character of Pitt has given to our government, a corresponding tone of pride and insolence. Pitt boldly robs us of those rights, which the system of North was filching from us by degrees. He provokes and defies the people, whom his more pliant and easy predecessor would have been content to cajole and amuse. Lord North left liberty nearly

nearly as he found it: but Pitt, should he drop to-morrow, would leave us a violated constitution; no freedom of the press; the bill of rights infringed; and our laws openly set at nought.

It may be considered also as no slight advantage, and it seems to have been recently obtained, that the minister has completely lost the esteem, though he retains the support or acquiescence, of the majority. He is no longer revered as a virtuous and consistent statesman. In these respects, no one attempts to defend him. He is a convicted violator of the constitution, and corruption never had a more profuse and unscrupulous agent. These are admitted censures; they are not, and they cannot be denied. He has forfeited the esteem and attachment, generally, of his disinterested friends. The opinion of virtuous men is against him, and that opinion finally will be followed by the public. At least, I cannot fear, that a minister not loved, not respected for his virtues, will be pertinaciously supported, when time has brought that distress upon the country, which seems to be the certain consequence of his plans: and I still less can apprehend that such a minister, opposed as he is at present, can effect the final ruin of our liberty. The struggle in which you have engaged, will probably be long and arduous; but I trust it will be as successful, as I think it meritorious.—Wishing you a long continuance of

 health,

health, private happiness, and public success,

I remain, Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

C. WYVILL.

P. S.—After having privately circulated near 2000 copies of the Pamphlet on Secession, in two editions, I lately offered to Mr. Debrett to print a third, if he would be the publisher. The answer was, what there was reason to expect, that he must still decline it.

LETTER XIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL, *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Oct. 25th*, 1799.

Sir,

IN my letter of the 12th of July last, I stated to you, at too great length, I fear, my reasons for hoping that success will ultimately crown your efforts to defend the constitution. And yet circumstances at that time obliged me to acknowledge, that nothing could then be done by general meetings of the people. I thought a favourable change of sentiments would take place; but I distinctly foresaw nothing by which it was to be speedily effected.

I cannot

I cannot refrain from seizing the earliest opportunity to inform you, that I now think circumstances, which have occurred since my return last week from the sea-coast, seem likely to give the public mind, in some considerable degree, and in no very long period of time, an impulse in that direction which is so much to be wished. I do not mean the now ascertained defeat of the attempt to restore the stadtholder of Holland; for that miscarriage will probably be forgiven. I allude to two circumstances, respecting our domestic affairs, apparently much less important, but which however have made an impression on the country, from which the most beneficial consequences may be found, perhaps, to follow: I mean the disembodying of the supplemental militia, and the refusal of the land-tax, from those who have not purchased their share of it. The first of these measures, I understand, has disgusted the officers of the North Yorkshire Regiment, who have just received an order for that purpose. The other, where it has been heard of, has created much alarm; and it will probably soon become a general alarm in those parts of England, which have most to lose by a new assessment, when the old land-tax has been sold. That the present tax upon land, according to the old assessment, has been refused in this part of Yorkshire, is most certain. My own land-tax, which had been paid to the parochial collector, has been refused, when tendered by him to the receiver, and it has just been paid back to me. And from

what I have heard from Masham, &c. I conclude it is a general measure.

I would not lay too much stress upon appearances of disgust and alarm, which have fallen under my own observation. But dislike of the minister and his despotic measures has been expressed to me, in stronger terms than I have heard before; and even by those who have usually differed with me upon these subjects. There is a nascent warmth manifested on this occasion, which proves that there is yet life in the hitherto torpid body of the nation. And in a state of affairs, critical beyond all example, as the present is, there is a variety of events almost sure to happen, any one of which will be sufficient, I trust, fully to restore to the public the powers of animation, which have been so long suspended. I would not express these hopes too sanguinely, nor yet conceal from you the sensation, which these measures appear to have excited.

I remain, with high respect,
and very sincere good wishes,
Sir,
Your most faithful servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. WYVILL.

Sir,

I HAVE to return you thanks for the letter with which you honoured me in the summer, as well as for that of the 25th ult.; and I am most sincerely obliged to you for your kind communications. I believe from what I hear, that the defeat in Holland does make a good deal of sensation; but what political influence it may have upon the public mind, remains to be seen.

With respect to the two other measures which you mention, that respecting the militia is, I believe, pretty generally (not to say universally) disapproved, but is less thought of in the parts adjacent to the metropolis, than I imagine it is in other parts of the kingdom. The refusal of the land-tax has not, as far as I can find, taken place at all in the near countries, nor do I hear that in this part of the world there is any suspicion upon the subject. Such a measure would be alarming, no doubt, and would be likely, more than any other, to produce powerful effects; and I should be much obliged to you, if you would let me know, whenever you gain further intelligence upon the subject. There were, as I am told, some paragraphs in the ministerial papers, previous to the meeting of parliament, which threw out a sort of menace

to those who had not purchased; but this was by many (and especially after parliament had separated without any thing being done in the business) considered as a trick to drive men to purchase.

The foolish opposition of the Court of Aldermen to my friend, Combe's, being mayor, has, I doubt not, very much exasperated the livery in general; but whether the livery alone *can* do much if they *will*, or whether they *will* if they *can*, is all problematical.—I shall dine at Guildhall on Saturday, and shall probably hear there as accurate an account of what is the state of things in the city as can be procured. The worst symptom, in my judgment, is the total insensibility that seems to me to prevail, in regard to the oppressions and injustice exercised against individuals. Roger O'Connor's case alone, in any other times, would have caused the liveliest sensations; and even the cruel sentences against Wakefield's booksellers, men, beyond all doubt, completely innocent in intention, would have rouzed some indignation.

I am, with great regard,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Tuesday*.

P. S.—I do not know whether you think, as I do, that the liberty of the press is, by the late transactions, as much *in fact* annihilated, as I apprehended it would be.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Nov.* 10*th*, 1799.

Sir,

SINCE I wrote on the refusal of the land-tax, I find that in this neighhourhood it has been a general measure; and I have understood, from one of the acting magistrates in a division at some distance, that in the 28 townships of that division, the whole land-tax has been refused. I hope, in a short time, to be able to give you a more complete account of Yorkshire, and other northern counties; as I have written to some of my friends upon the subject, and shall have an opportunity, in two or three days, to make inquiry, personally, in the West-Riding.

I do entirely agree with you, in thinking that, *in fact*, the liberty of the press is lost; but as it has been lost, not by any legislative change of law, but by the timidity or corruption of some juries, I trust the time is fast approaching, when the advocates for the rights of the people will find juries better disposed to do them justice, than Mr. Wakefield and others have found them. Some time ago I was informed, that Lord Eldon had told the friend who gave me this information, that juries were disposed, especially in London, to outstep the wishes of ministers;

ministers; and that he, in his official capacity, as Attorney General, at that time, found it more necessary to keep them back, and restrain their violence, than to push and press them forward to conviction. Since that time, the temper of the public is, I believe, materially altered; and Sir J. Mitford will, probably, meet with juries less compliant. Yet still there is, throughout the nation, so great a dread of revolution, and the many horrid calamities which would be its inseparable concomitants, that whatever tends that way must expect the utmost severity from juries. And, I am inclined to think, that the disregard, which you justly remark in the public, on the subject of individual oppressions, may thus be accounted for, without supposing that general want of sympathy to have taken place, which would, indeed, render our situation utterly hopeless. The persons alluded to have been unjustly treated, but their conduct, in a greater or less degree, has been thought to have a revolutionary tendency; and the severity of the minister, though irregular in some cases, and excessive in others, is held to be justifiable, or at least bearable, from the necessities of the state, and the danger of a civil war. But should he attack men of character, whose zeal has been confined to the pursuit of constitutional reform by legal means alone, I trust it would not be easy for him to find juries base enough to co-operate with him; or, if he did, that the oppression of such men would quickly be followed by national resentment, and his well-

well-merited punishment. That he once meditated such an attack; that he had even fixed his revengeful eye upon yourself, the Duke of Bedford, and others who stand foremost among the friends of constitutional liberty, I have little doubt; but the time is happily past, when it could be supposed possible that such projects might be revolving in his mind. Your consummate prudence, in the difficult crisis alluded to, and the growing distress and discontent of the country, have rendered the execution of them impracticable. And I trust, during the rest of his administration, Mr. Pitt will be reduced to fight a defensive battle, constantly losing ground, and finally routed and driven from his position.

I hope to have the pleasure to hear that your reception yesterday was satisfactory, not only in passing the streets of London, but at Guildhall, and in the Mansion House. The spark of vital animation must first manifest itself, at the heart of the body politic; it will then be extended soon to the extremities.

I am, with the greatest regard,
Sir,
Your faithful and obedient servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Dec. 5th*, 1799.

Sir,

I DO not find, that in Northumberland, or Durham, any instance of the land-tax being refused has occurred. But in the other Ridings of Yorkshire, as well as in this Northern one, I believe, there have been many refusals, particularly in the neighbourhood of Sheffield and Knaresborough. My friends from whom I have received this information, are all agreed in thinking this nothing more than a temporary delay, till those embarrassments can be cleared up, which have been occasioned in the different offices, for the sale of the land-tax, by the inaccuracy of clerks, or the want of punctuality in purchasers. It is certain, that menaces have been thrown out by the clerks, in many parts of the country, that the old land-tax would be received no more. But in all probability, these have only been the unauthorised effusions of zeal, by subalterns in office, who had an instinctive feeling, that such threats might be useful, and could not be unacceptable to their superiors.

In my late excursion into the West of Yorkshire, I observed a favourable change of opinion in some of my old associates, whose

whose conduct, for several years, had not been perfectly consistent with their former zeal for liberty. They are still unwilling, however, to quit the minister. They have so often declared themselves friends to the war, and his new coercive system, and feel themselves so entangled by these declarations, that they know not how to leave him. This is a false and disingenuous shame, no doubt; but the meaner and more corrupt motives of mercantile advantage, probably, operate on minds still less ingenuous, with greater force, and to a far greater extent. In London, I fear, this is yet very much the case; from the little support given in the Common-Council, to the late motion for an address to the King. I saw with pleasure, however, that you and your friends had been well received on going into the city, to attend the Lord Mayor.

I am sorry for the dishonourable part lately acted by two of the greatest men produced by the French Revolution: I mean, Sieyes and Buonaparte. They might have been, and I hoped they would be, the Franklin and Washington of France. But to that glorious distinction, they have poorly preferred power; and their names will now be handed down to posterity, with the disgrace justly merited by usurpers. Their usurpation may be successful, indeed, both at home and abroad.

Like Cromwell, they may make the powers of Europe tremble, and aggrandise their country; but, like him, they have violated every

every principle of liberty, retarded the peaceful settlement of their own nation, and injured freedom in every other. It more than ever confirms, however, the propriety of that course of conduct, which has been pursued by you, Sir, and the other friends of liberty and moderation in this country. I trust, that your endeavours, peacefully to restore our constitutional rights, will be successful at last. But whether they succeed or not, they will intitle you to the everlasting gratitude and reverence of your countrymen.

I have not heard what your sentiments are on the overthrow of the late government of France. But I have thus frankly declared my own, from a strong assurance, in my mind, that our political principles are too nearly the same, to lead on this occasion to very different conclusions.

I am sure, too, that unreserve may be perfectly compatible with the highest deference and respect, with which I am ever,

Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Sir,

I WAS much obliged by your letter of the 5th ultimo, and have no doubt but your conjectures concerning the causes of what passed about the land-tax, are just. I am glad you found even a tendency to a favourable turn of sentiment in the West-Riding. The false shame of quitting a minister whom they have supported, does, no doubt, operate with many; and constancy is so excellent a quality, that I do not wonder that a conduct, which has even the appearance of it, should recommend itself to good minds. But the wide extension of corrupt influence; the odium which has been thrown on democratical principles; the depression of public spirit which that odium, as well as more direct modes of persecution, has effected; and, above all, the military habits of thinking, which, by the mode in which the country has been armed, have been rendered so fashionable: these, in my judgment, are the principal causes of the state we are fallen into. And it is with regard to the last circumstance, particularly, that ministers seem to me to have acted with most art. The *esprit de corps* is one of the strongest powers that operate on the human mind; and by making

making all gentlemen soldiers, they have contrived to make them nearly all royalists, in the worst sense of the word.

I think exactly as you do, with respect to the last revolution at Paris, except that, perhaps, I never had conceived so high an opinion of Sieyes, as you seem to have entertained. That a great General, like Buonaparte, should be inclined to military means of effecting a military government, is less to be wondered at than lamented; but he had, to be sure, a field of glory before him, such as no man ever had before; and by taking the common and beaten path of ambition, he has, as you observe, done much against the liberty of mankind, in every part of the world. But for Sieyes, there is no excuse.—The only good that could come from this event, so pernicious to the cause of general liberty, was peace; and that you see our ministers are determined to refuse. Whether this refusal will rouse any spirit here, remains to be seen; but I think one may safely say that, if it does not, nothing will. London and Yorkshire are the two principal points to which I look; and if even proper measures should be adopted in those two places, unless they are carried by such majorities as to have something of the appearance of unanimity, they will be ineffectual, the strength of the crown is so very great.

I do assure you, I am exceedingly obliged by the unreserved manner in which you express yourself upon the political events of France,

France, as well as upon our own: and am, with great regard, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Wednesday.*

LETTER XVIII.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Jan.* 13*th*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

(FOR enjoying a share in your esteem, as I am conscious I do, and feeling for you the highest deference, and the warmest wishes for your health, happiness, and success, why should I hesitate any longer to address you in terms, in some degree suited to those feelings?) I have just received from Mr. Polhill, of Chepstead, in Kent, a letter, inclosing a copy of an address to the High-Sheriff of that county, requesting him to call a county meeting, to petition the King to avail himself of the late overture from the Consul, Buonaparte, to negotiate an honourable and equitable peace. I think it material to send you this information without loss of time; and I must add, that the measure has been suggested to Mr. Polhill, by Lord Stanhope, with whom the address to the Sheriff appears to have been concerted.

I have written to Lord Stanhope and Mr. Polhill, this day, to recommend caution, and

an immediate endeavour to ascertain the concurrence of other counties and places, to a considerable extent, before they bring their measure forward in Kent. And I have promised them to consult our friends in this county, upon the subject. What their opinion will be, on the expediency of moving Yorkshire, at this time, I cannot venture to say; but I am rather apprehensive it will be, *not* for an immediate call of the county. It would be a material point gained, if the Duke of Norfolk and the Devonshire family should approve the measure, and resolve personally to support it. Without their strenuous assistance, I should be inclined to doubt, whether we should be strong enough. Without something nearly approaching to unanimity, as you say in your letter of the 8th of January, the people cannot hope to succeed in their petitions to the throne. The power and influence of the crown are greatly increased, beyond what they were in the year 1780. And that degree of unanimity, (if one may so speak) which alone can enable us to make such an application with success, must be at least as strong as it was in those better times: it must be almost the unanimity of the nation; not that of *one* or a *few* counties, in which two or three individuals may happen to possess great power and authority. Excuse great haste, and be assured,

I am ever,
My dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 22*d*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE written, with as little loss of time as possible, to about twenty of the principal friends to our public cause, in Yorkshire, and the counties of Durham and Northumberland; requesting their opinion on the proposition made by the men of Kent; and particularly, whether it is probable that a county-meeting in favour of peace would be well supported in Yorkshire, or those adjoining counties; or that it would be approved by the kingdom. I cautiously avoided to intimate any opinion of my own, wishing to collect theirs, without saying more than what you have said in effect to me (in your letter of the 8th of January), and what I believe every one will admit to be right, viz. "That if we had a clear majority in this county and in the kingdom at large, it would be right now to come forward, as we should certainly have strong ground to stand on; but that, without good reason, to expect to be thus supported, it would be worse than useless to call a meeting of the county of York."

To these letters, I have received seven answers; and they are such, as in my letter of the 13th instant, I told you I was apprehensive they would be, from the strong pre-

judices still remaining against us; though it is evident they have been very considerably weakened. Most of these answers are from gentlemen well acquainted with the western part of Yorkshire; and they unanimously agree, that the time is not yet come for an attempt to move this county to petition for peace. From their unanimous opinion, I can only expect a similar answer from the other gentlemen applied to; or if one or two should happen to be inclined to a more sanguine opinion, it would alter the case but little; and to expect more, would be in a high degree improbable.

As soon as I have received a few more answers, I will write again to the Kentish gentlemen, and state the fact as it may then be, respecting the opinions of well-wishers to peace, in this and the two northern counties before mentioned. I hope their joint opinion may have the good effect of inducing the men of Kent to suspend their movement, till a much greater co-operation may be obtained, than can be at present expected. And indeed the effecting of this good by these means, was what I thought much more likely to be the result of my correspondence, than that I should find opinions so strong for a county movement, as to justify our going on.

I think it very necessary, however, to lose no time in acquainting you with the unanimous opinion already obtained from seven of my correspondents, who are among the weightiest of our friends in every respect of property,

property, good sense, and zeal for the cause of peace and constitutional liberty. At the same time, I think I clearly perceive that the public mind is advancing fast to that change of sentiments which we wish, as essentially necessary, not only to the preservation of liberty in this country, but also to the prevention of those calamities to which a revolution would unavoidably expose us.

I am, dear Sir,
With sincerest regard,
Your faithful humble servant,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 24, 1800.

Dear Sir,

I WOULD not have troubled you again on the subject of the Kentish proposition, on account of the additional opinions against a county meeting in Yorkshire, which have been just received: but it may not be altogether useless to mention, that with these I have also obtained the joint opinion of three gentlemen, who are among our most distinguished friends in the north of England, and perfectly acquainted with the sentiments of the counties of Durham and Northumberland.

They are unanimous in thinking, that the proposal in Kent is premature; that the counties in general, and their two counties in particular, are not yet ripe for public meetings. I am told, that it is your intention to attend the house on Monday. I rejoice to hear it. May you meet the Minister dismayed by the loss of friends, and the House disposed to listen to the voice of reason and justice!

I am ever, dear Sir,
Your most faithful servant,
C. WYVILL.

The Hon. C. J. Fox.

LETTER XXI.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I OWE you many thanks, as well for the obliging manner in which you express yourself towards me, as for your communications in regard to what you conceive to be the opinion of those persons in the North, whose general sentiments concur with ours. I was much afraid it would be as they think it is; though I continue in my opinion, that the present conjuncture is a test of whether there is any life left in the cause; and from that test, I am led to something very like despair.

despair. I have, however, been persuaded to attend the House of Commons on Monday, though I confess that in so doing I shall rather yield to the opinion of my friends, than follow my own inclination or judgment. However this shall be (unless some great and unexpected change take place in the feelings of the nation) the last instance of my compliance; and I shall return hither on Tuesday, with a full determination against any future attendance on parliament, and with a conviction that the politics of this country are never likely to take such a turn, as to make it useful or fit for me to meddle in them. Cicero says in one of his letters: *Hoc quidem tempore non me movet respublica, non qua quicquam sit mihi carius, aut esse debeat; sed quod desperatis etiam Hippocrates vetat adhibere medicinam.* And this is very much my manner of thinking at present. The Lord Mayor informs me, that he sees no prospect of doing any thing with the Common Council: with the Livery, indeed, he is of opinion, that any motion for peace, or rather for treaty, would be successful; but I hardly think it worth while to try it with that body, unless it were thought advisable to stir in other places.

I think the Livery, without the Common Council, would not be considered as a precedent for other corporations, which is the principal point.

I hear that Wilberforce has expressed in private (and to a friend of mine, who, he might guess, would repeat it to me) his regret

that the offer of negociation was refused; but what his parliamentary conduct will be remains to be seen. His opinion, if declared, might perhaps have some weight in Yorkshire; and yet I do not think it had much, when he declared against the Minister upon a former occasion,

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Saturday.*

LETTER XXII.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Feb. 9th*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

I THANK you for the obliging communication of your intention to attend in parliament, on the great question of war or peace, at which Mr. Erskine justly terms a new æra of the war. The division, I see, has disappointed many of your friends, and shown that you judged much better than they, what the disposition of parliament would be found. Yet I rejoice more than ever that you did attend; because I think the debate will do infinite service to the cause. The advantage

advantage in point of argument was evidently on the side of those who pleaded for peace.

But what I hope will tend to open the eyes of the public, even more strongly than the arguments for peace, though inforced with the utmost powers of reason and eloquence, are the confessions extorted from ministers themselves in the course of the debate. They acknowledged the sense of the public, in 1797, to have been for peace; they prided themselves in having negociated with the enemy, in compliance with the public wish; and yet avowed their alarm, lest a peace should have been the result of their negociation. They have in effect confessed their insincerity in treating, before; and the nation must see that their asserted deference to public opinion is a mere fallacy, since they now refuse to treat, when public opinion is more decided for peace.

All this is plain, and it cannot but make an impression on the nation; I trust it will be a great impression, though it may not appear immediately in any very sensible change, producing county meetings, &c.

But though I trust the public cause has gained greatly by your appearance in parliament last week, I must own, I think, your resolution to retire to St. Anne's Hill again, and to return to parliament no more, till some great emergency renews the prospect that good may be done, is becoming your character, and best for the public. And it

is impossible to consider the distress of almost every class of the people, and their decided wish for peace; the immense burthens which must soon be added to that, whose pressure is already felt so severely; and the prospect of an indefinite addition to the load of taxes, if the present Ministers should continue in power, without entertaining a strong hope, that your renewed secession will be but for a short period. When the vessel is full to the brim, or nearly so, any small addition may suffice to make it run over. This seems to be our case at present; the nation has borne much from the Minister; but he is too arrogant, too unmerciful to be always borne. He goes on, accumulating injury upon injury. At last some injury, some calamity, perhaps far less than those already endured, will exhaust the patience of the country, and their resentment will suddenly burst forth, with effects redoubled by the long suppression of their complaints. At that time, your late effort in parliament to shorten the period of national calamity, will be remembered with gratitude; and I trust that you, Sir, aided by the distinguished friends who have supported your exertions, will then have it in your power to overturn the present corrupt and tyrannical system of administration, and yet, in the moment of reform, effectually to calm the agitated mind of the public, and stop the tendency to a revolution, which, but for your authority with the

the nation, would then be but too likely to take place.

I remain, dear Sir,
With the greatest regard,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XXIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 13*th*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

IT is owing in a great measure to the suggestion of Lord Stanhope, that you are troubled with the accompanying copy of a letter of mine, to his lordship of yesterday's date, containing my reasons for objecting to the word "Inhabitants" in the Kentish requisition. I will not add to that trouble, by enlarging here upon the subject. The facts, on which I ground my reasoning, I dare say, you perfectly remember; and the concurrence of opinion which I take to be with me in these parts, I believe you will find to be nearly as I have represented it; at least, I have not intentionally been guilty of the smallest exaggeration.

In times as critical as these, the word in question

question requires the most careful and serious consideration. On that account, I trust, it is unnecessary for me to apologize for taking this liberty. It might be otherwise, or at least my feelings might be different, if I were addressing an ordinary statesman. But writing to you, I feel it is impossible you can, for a moment, suppose me to have any other sentiments, than those of the highest veneration, even when you find me arguing with a degree of earnestness, against a measure to which you are said to have given your approbation,

I am ever, dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XXIV.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I RETURN you many thanks for your letters, and am quite of your opinion, that at present it would be far better that no meetings should be attempted, nor indeed till there are reasonable hopes of their being pretty general. I am even sorry the Livery is to meet, and I shall do what I can to discourage Westminster. Lord Stanhope, whom I saw

saw about a fortnight since at my nephew's, is of a different opinion; but he has very different notions from mine, of the dispositions of the people in general, and particularly of that of the lower orders. With respect to the propriety of calling inhabitants, rather than confining meetings to freeholders, I think the question stands upon different grounds in your part of the country and in this. With us, it is not an innovation; for to the last meetings of this county at Epsom, and I believe also to the two last at Maidstone, inhabitants as well as freeholders were summoned. With you, where the practice has been uniform for restraining the summons to freeholders, I think your arguments against making any innovation are very strong. Upon principle, however, the right of petitioning, though belonging to all descriptions and classes of men, seems to be a privilege more peculiarly necessary for those who are only virtually represented in parliament, than for those who have actual deputies there; and such persons therefore appear to be most directly and pointedly called upon to exercise that right when occasion calls for it; wherefore it has always appeared to me, that it is one of the most reprehensible parts of the bill of 1795, that it leaves the least degree of liberty in petitioning to those who have most occasion for it, viz. to those who are not electors. But this reasoning, such as it is, is only applicable to cases where either

either mode may be adopted with equal prudence; but where one is likely to create more alarm than the other, and consequently to keep off persons who might be otherwise willing to join us, there can be no doubt, but we ought to be governed by prudential reasons, especially when, by following the larger plan in some places, we are clear from the suspicion of giving up the principle, or even of suffering it to lie entirely dormant.

The event in the House of Commons was just what I expected it to be in every respect. Erskine spoke admirably; Dundas's speech was very indifferent; and Pitt's had more of the faults of his oratory, and less of its excellencies, than most that ever came from him. The House of Commons, too, as much in their hearts inclined to negotiation, as any other 558 men in the kingdom, if not more; and yet you see the division; and so it will be till the country speak a decided language. Mr. Pitt's avowal of his former negotiations having been taken up in compliance with the wishes of the public, appeared to me, as it seems to have done to you, the most important concession that could be made; and I endeavoured to mark it as such. To men capable of seeing, it shews distinctly two things; first, that to get even a negotiation set on foot, public declarations of opinion are necessary; and secondly, that negociations managed by the present men will always be a mere compliment to public opinion, and a

mean

mean to get money; against their own sentiments, and therefore probably insincere, and certainly ineffectual.

I am with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Monday, Feb. 17, 1800.

LETTER XXV.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Feb. 27th,* 1800.

Dear Sir,

I WAS extremely obliged by your kind letter of the 17th of this month, and happy to find that you concur in sentiment with me, respecting the expedience of innovating as little as possible in county meetings. I wish the practice of late years in Kent and Surry had not been so wide a departure from the general custom, by which meetings have been usually confined to the freeholders only. Not that I think an exception of one or two counties to the common rule would be attended with any very serious inconvenience, if considered with relation only to so small a minority, apart from other circumstances connected with it. But, considering your local situation in Surry, I own, I am sorry

sorry that the custom, or rather perhaps the recent practice in that county, has been to call *the inhabitants* to the meetings at Epsom. Ever since I have been engaged in business of this kind, I have observed that the country gentlemen are inclined to be jealous of the democracy in and near the capital. If the whole inhabitancy of Surry should be summoned to a county meeting, a large proportion, if not a majority of those who attended, would probably be inhabitants of Southwark. This circumstance, I fear, might give uneasiness to the country gentlemen; and, as you are connected with both Westminster and Surrey, their jealousy might be extended to you; and thus, in a considerable degree, your gaining the confidence of that body of men might be retarded; without whose concurrence, or, at least, that of a clear majority, the success of your exertions will be very doubtful.

I am satisfied, that if, by your influence, the county of Surry could be induced at the next meeting, to drop its recent practice, and revert to the general custom, it would be a great advantage to you and to the common cause: I mean, if this could be done without disgusting your more zealous, or more impetuous friends, in any material degree. You would indeed appear, in the case supposed, at the head of a smaller majority at Epsom; but the increase of your majority in many other parts of the kingdom would be more than a compensation. The gentry, though alarmed

alarmed and deluded, are yet honest. Gain them, and all will be gained. And to gain them, I think, you will best succeed,

Parcendo viribus, atque
Extenuando eas consulto;

By adhering as much as possible to mild and customary modes of proceeding, and never resorting to more strong, though still legal measures, till every milder method has been tried in vain. In that case, the circumstances which may create the necessity for such stronger measures, will at the same time constitute their justification, even in the judgment of the gentry. But then the necessity must be evident; and the measures alluded to must not be voluntarily sought; they must be suggested by the necessity, and grow out of it.

Whether you can interpose, either with propriety, or with effect, is what you alone can determine. It is a mere wish that I have expressed; because I am satisfied, that the consequences would be very beneficial, if, at the expected county meetings, all cause of uneasiness, on this topic, were removed, by a uniform adherence to the general precedent. But if you perceive objections against your interference in the business which cannot be got over, then it will be the more necessary, I conceive, that the ancient custom of the counties be upheld by you and your friends, as strongly as possible, in every other instance; so that it may be clearly under-

stood, that the departure from the general rule, in Surry, ought not to be ascribed to you, but imputed to its real cause, the peculiar custom of that county.

With every good wish, I conclude, and am, with great regard,

Dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

C. WYVILL.

P. S. I am glad you have discouraged a meeting of Westminster at present. It is much better postponed, till there is a probability of similar movements in many other cities and also counties.

LETTER XXVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Oct.* 22*d*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

BY this day's post and to-morrow's, I propose writing to several of our friends in different parts of Yorkshire, to request a private meeting at York, on the 11th of November, for the purpose of consultation on the question, whether it may not be expedient to call a meeting of the county before the end of December next. The result of the intended conference I will not fail to communicate

cate to you, without delay, from York. In the mean time, I would suggest, that if a meeting should be resolved on, it will be of great importance to be previously certain of the concurrence of the Duke of Norfolk, the Devonshire family, Lord Thanet, &c. not only by signing the requisition with us, but, as I formerly stated, giving their personal attendance, with every possible exertion of active support. I also would observe, that it were greatly to be wished, that the concurrence of Lord Fitzwilliam, or at least his silent acquiescence, might be obtained. Here I feel the want of our ever-lamented friend, Sir George Savile, by whose mediation union was most fortunately preserved between the popular party in Yorkshire, and Lord Fitzwilliam's worthy and honoured uncle, in the great struggle twenty years ago. The loss of Sir G. Savile was to this country irreparable; and no one I fear can be pointed out as a fit person to mediate between the friends of liberty in Yorkshire at present, and Lord Fitzwilliam, as he before mediated successfullywith Lord Rockingham during the American war. I only beg to suggest the great advantage that you possibly may find some means to attain, though I cannot see any mode of application which is likely to succeed.

I will only add, that I have ventured to propose this private conference at York, in consequence of the wish earnestly expressed to me by some of our most respectable friends in the North. I chiefly allude to Dr. Fenwick and Mr. T. Bigge, men from

whose talents and public spirit we have every thing to expect at Durham and in Northumberland. I also was encouraged, by observing the spirit which has displayed itself lately in London; and by the information I have recently obtained, that the trade of the West-Riding is bad at present, and the merchants at Leeds are much dissatisfied with the measures of the administration. Indeed, a change of sentiment seems rapidly to be taking place throughout the nation.

I remain, dear Sir,
With the greatest respect and regard,
Faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

The Hon. C. J. Fox.

LETTER XXVII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I AM much obliged to you for yours of the 22d instant, and think there may be good, and can be no harm, from the private meeting you propose.

With respect to the great names that you mention, I should think the Duke of Norfolk's and Lord Thanet's concurrence certain; but whether either of them, especially the former, could be prevailed upon to give his personal attendance unless he had reason to think the sentiments of the county very strong indeed, in favour of the measure, I much

much doubt. In regard to the Duke of Devonshire, I believe he attends less to politics than ever; and I should think it very unlikely that he would take any very active part in any way at present. He did not attend in the House of Lords upon the question of the answer to Bonaparte last January.*

I cannot say I lay much stress upon what has passed lately in London. The city must declare itself much more unequivocally, before I have any reliance upon it. And indeed I am much more convinced that nothing can be done *without* the city, and Yorkshire declaring themselves spiritedly, than that even from such a manifestation of their spirit as I should wish, any real good can be obtained. The country is terribly subdued, and even they who are weary of the war do not appear to me to be so sick as they ought to be of the principles which caused it. If there is a point that can be pushed successfully, it must be the war, and then *perhaps* (but it is only *perhaps*) they who join the Whigs upon that point, may feel themselves obliged to acquiesce in others. At least it is worth trying. When I say the war is the point to be pushed, I mean in argument, for a petition for peace alone would be of no avail and evaded in the most obvious manner. The removal of ministers is the only rational subject of petition in the present circumstances; but whether

* From motives of delicacy to a most respectable individual, some sentences of a personal nature have been omitted here. A similar liberty has been taken in Letter 31, for the same reason.

the country is ready to come to such a measure, and to pursue it vigorously, I much doubt, and still more, whether even supposing that object to be attained, they are ready to accept a real system of reform and liberty, without which little or nothing will have been obtained.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Tuesday, Oct. 28th, 1800.

LETTER XXVIII.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill, *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Nov. 2d,* 1800.

Dear Sir,

FINDING even a private meeting objected to, by some of our sincerest friends at York, I thought it expedient to inform Mr. Wrightson, Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Fawkes, who had agreed to attend, that I did not wish to give them that trouble on the tenth of this month. But being convinced how necessary it is, that a great impression should be made on the public mind, if possible, this winter, and also, that the public is well disposed to receive the impression we wish to be stamped upon it, I have represented this opinion

opinion to the gentlemen named, wishing them to propose a private meeting, some weeks after the 10th of November, and offering to attend, whenever they may desire it. Some of my reasons for this conduct, I will state as briefly as I can. I wish not to offend the gentlemen at York, by persisting to hold the proposed private meeting there, against their opinion; especially as I conceive the delay of two or three weeks can do no harm. And I believe the distress of the towns in the West-Riding is become so great, that our chief support may be expected from that quarter, from whence we have before experienced the most violent and overpowering opposition. The landed interest in the other two divisions, are making enormous advantages from the present high prices of provisions, and I do not perceive any symptom of their shrinking, from the hazardous policy they have so long adhered to.—But the distress of the trading district in the West, is nearly universal; and in many instances, the landed interest of that Riding, must feel their advantages to be greatly reduced, by the consequence of a declining trade—I mean by the increase of the Poors Rates; so that if I am right in this reasoning, more converts to our cause may be expected out of the landed interest of the West, than out of both the other divisions of Yorkshire, and a still greater number will probably come over with them, from the different manufactories of that part of the country. The facts on which I ground these hopes are the following.

lowing. I have been informed by a friend of mine at Wakefield, but not agreeing in political sentiments, that the poor's rate at Halifax is at nine shillings in the pound, and at Wakefield not less than fourteen shillings. I have been assured there is near Leeds, a township, in which the rate is so high as twenty-six shillings in the pound. I understand from persons concerned in the woollen trade, that it is bad at present, and that a great many hands have been dismissed at Huddersfield, and other places. In short, the parochial burthens are extremely increased, and the means of bearing them, are diminished in an equal proportion, and this, at the very time when the income tax is said to be more rigidly exacted then before, and when the price of provisions is more than doubled; at least with respect to corn of every kind. From this view of the state of the country, I begin to entertain rather a confident hope of our success this winter in Yorkshire; and from what appeared at the late meeting in Middlesex, it seems probable that the spirit of the people is rising, in and near the Metropolis.

In the event of a county meeting at York, I am more anxious that Lord George Cavendish should attend, than the Duke, for obvious reasons, and you perhaps may prevail with his Lordship. It gives me the greatest pleasure to find that *you* may be the wished for mediator with Lord Fitzwilliam. I did not flatter myself your connection with him, was so well preserved, as I now understand

it

it to be. I dare say there would be little difficulty in coming to an agreement on the object of the first meeting. I should suppose a petition to remove Ministers, or a change of men and measures, would be what our friends would generally unite to support. In this, of course, you will understand me to speak only for myself, as an individual, merely giving his unauthorized opinion. *But such is my opinion,* and indeed my letters to the gentlemen named in the beginning of this letter, have alluded to that measure, as the probable object of the popular meetings in general. From a change of men and measures, I expect a competent security for liberty, without which I fully agree with you, in thinking that little or nothing will have been done. And I expect measures of that satisfactory nature, from a change of men, because I think no change, no permanent change can be made, without placing you at the head of affairs. If then Lord Fitzwilliam could be brought to relish a petition, for the removal of Ministers, from his confidence in you, that reform under your conduct would not be carried too far, I think, the popular party have equal reason to confide in your honour and fidelity to carry it far enough, that is, as far as the limits of that plan to which you have given the sanction of your approbation. I think they have the greatest reason to place this full reliance on your fidelity; and as an unconnected individual,

dividual, I assure you, I think they would place it accordingly. For myself I shall say, upon this occasion, that I am so fully satisfied on that point, that I could not have relied with a firmer trust, on the promise of the revered Washington, than on your word.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most faithful humble servant,
C. WYVILL.

P. S.—If a general meeting should be held in Yorkshire this winter, I am persuaded, not only that our friends would agree to petition for the removal of ministers, but that they would readily consent to be silent on the subject of reform, at least, not then to move any question upon it. I certainly would object to any such question, at this first meeting. It may be necessary in some future stage of the struggle, to bring that question forward, and to give it the utmost support in Yorkshire, &c. in order to enable you to effect that radical reform, to which nothing will ever induce the court to consent, but the influence of general opinion strongly declared. They who think with me in Yorkshire, in the circumstances alluded to, will consider it to be their duty to furnish every assistance in their power, to promote the glorious end for which you are contending. But when I consider the conduct of Lord Fitzwilliam in Ireland, I flatter myself,

self, that reform in England will not be found an insuperable bar to that general union, without which the efforts of the best and wisest men probably will not be able to preserve the constitution.

LETTER XXIX.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Nov. 2d*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

I THINK it right to inform you, that my friends Mr. Bigge, Dr. Fenwick, and Mr. Strickland, agree in thinking, but with some variation of sentiment, that I am too sanguine in my hope, that county meetings may be successfully called in the course of the next two months. I highly respect the judgment, and public spirit of each; and I should feel myself guilty of an improper concealment on that very account, did I not confess to you their dissent, and thus prevent the inconvenience of your allowing to my opinion more weight than it deserves.

On the other hand, it is fair to state to you, that, since I wrote last, I have understood, that the poor rate at Rippon is at fourteen shillings in the pound; it is also very

very high at Knaresborough, Darlington and Durham. I find the wish for peace universal, and apprehensions of severe calamity, in the event of continued hostilities, expressed more freely, and more frequently, then I have ever heard them before. At county meetings, little opposition to a petition for peace would probably he heard; it would be too unpopular to be maintained a moment. But *at present* the public mind is not equally bent on a change of ministers; and I agree with my friends, already named, and I presume with you, Sir, in thinking that the time is not yet arrived, when the counties would almost unanimously demand a change in the administration, as the only, or at least, as the best and surest way of procuring peace. But when a separate peace has been concluded between France and Austria, it seems probable that the country will then be readily induced to connect those two objects together. In 1797, just after the treaty of Campo Formio had been signed, I found this disposition strong in Yorkshire, to connect a change of system, with a change of ministers; but for want of timely assistance to promote that disposition, it was overcome by the art and influence of the minister, aided at the time by the mad threats of the Directory, to invade Great Britain. But the distress felt at this moment, is far more severe and extensive, and the necessity for peace is more evidently seen. If then after three years and a half have elapsed, from that time when the minister himself

himself confessed, that peace was the wish of the nation, he suffers us to be placed again in the same alarming situation, it is not too much to be hoped, I think, that his expulsion from power, will appear highly desireable, or even absolutely necessary to a great majority of the country. Considering this event of a separate peace upon the continent to be certain, or very nearly so, and also to be an event on the point of completion, I thought it would be prudent that some preparatory steps should be taken, in the view of that approaching event, to facilitate the successful holding of county meetings. I am still much inclined to that opinion; yet now fully satisfied, as I was a month ago, that no county meeting should actually be called, till it was known with certainty, that Great Britain was left the only power engaged in the war with France. The vain and futile hopes which now amuse and delude the public will then give place to fear and indignation; and I trust, that they who shall then propose a change of men, as well as measures, will meet with a willing audience.

But if in a state of so much internal distress and foreign danger, the friends of their country should remain inactive, I own, I am at a loss to imagine that state of public affairs, which can with reason be expected to encourage activity. If no regular, legal movements be made, there may, there undoubtedly will be tumultuous insurrections, from the mere despair and frenzy of the lower people. By suppressing these tumults, ministers

sters will acquire fresh credit, while our friends, from inactivity, will become languid, desponding, and disunited. From habit the nation will be less alarmed at its danger, and less irritated by the pressure of its burthens, and will gradually relapse into its former state of abject submission, or torpid acquiescence. In that absence of public spirit, in that dejected temper of the nation, a new election of parliament will give the minister the same set of servile adherents, with perhaps not six exceptions in England, of men elected on views of constitutional freedom. The certain and fatal consequence needs not to be named to you.

If this reasoning be just, some attempt to animate the public mind *in a legal way*, should be made, as soon as the separate peace with the emperor is ascertained. I would not sanguinely predict immediate and complete success; yet a spirit and energy would probably be thus called forth, which after a struggle, like that in 1780, but perhaps more tedious, and more arduous too, would finally prevail, and restore the genuine principles of our constitution,

And now, Sir, I must intreat you to excuse the trouble I have given you, in this and my preceding letter, of the 2d of November; which I never should have written, if I had not relied most completely on your candor and good-will. I feel myself to have performed an act of duty, in offering my humble opinion on the present state of the country; in doing which, I have been obliged

obliged to touch on certain subjects, of no small delicacy and importance. If the post be too insecure a mode of conveyance for papers discussing the topics alluded to; or should those topics be not quite ripe for discussion, I trust that your silence will prevent the possibility of harm to the public cause. But *mine* would have been a breach of duty; and this fault, as I felt it, would have been aggravated by an improper diffidence of your regard. May your determination, and that of your friends, after you have maturely considered every material information, and every view of the great question before you, be what in the present dangerous state of our country, and its constitution, is best calculated for the preservation of both. Such is the earnest wish, such is the hope and trust of,

Dear Sir,

Your most faithful servant,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XXX.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE this day received yours of the 22d, for which, as well as for that of the 2d, which I found here, on my return from Norfolk last week, I return you many thanks.

I have

I have no apprehension of trusting the post with correspondence such as ours; only of course in some instances, names might not be so properly mentioned, I mean of such, if they should occur, who are in any degree dependent on administration. These you mention, Dr. F, &c, are of a very different description; and though the gentlemen are not personally known to me, their opinions, from all I have heard of them, carry great weight with them. If they are right (and I have little doubt but they are so) it is difficult to forcsee the time when the country will be ready to shew itself in an effectual manner. The event which you look to, of Austria's making a separate peace is, if we can give any credit to Pitt, a very uncertain one, and if it should happen, it is not improbable but it may be followed by some attempt to negociate from our Ministers, which, whether it be sincere or not, while it is pending, will afford a pretence against any attempts out of doors towards peace. It looks as if Pitt particularly laid in for this, by his pretending so much confidence in Austria, and stating his rejection of Bonaparte's last offer of separate negociation, to have been dictated by *public faith*. Now the absurdity of this pretence, at a time when the emperor is actually negociating, is so glaring, that I confess I should think the present the fittest time to make the attack, upon the ground of ministers refusing to treat separately, at a time when their ally was actually doing the same thing. This

matter

matter will, I believe, be shortly discussed in the House of Commons by Grey and others, and will then perhaps be more fully understood. But all discussion is vain, if the country is not pre-disposed to listen to it, and whether it be so or not, many others can judge far better than I. Perhaps in the present circumstances, petitions for peace, if that is all that can be had, would do better than nothing, though I confess that the shuffling and evading system, at which not only Pitt himself, but many of his supporters seem, particularly dexterous, seems to me very likely to render them of no effect, by meeting them with declarations as pacific as the petitions themselves.

I agree entirely in what you say of the fatal consequences like to follow, if no legal steps of showing the public discontent should be adopted for some time to come. They are consequences, however, which I have long foreseen, and to which I have been endeavouring for some years to make up my mind. If the Emperor should make a separate peace, it may, and I hope will, have the effect you look to, unless that effect should be counteracted by some proposal, on the part of ministers, such as I have alluded to. For this the better prepared we are, the better; and if we could be before hand, and get the counties to ask the dismission of ministers before they can announce their negotiation, it will be of great advantage; for a negotiation begun, in such circumstances, by men who declare that in their former ones they dreaded success as

much or more than failure, cannot, I think, satisfy even those who are most willing to be deceived. If, on the other hand, ministers do not adopt, in the event of an Austrian peace, the conduct I have been supposing, our game will be still easier; but whether there is spirit enough in the country to do any good, or whether, even supposing spirit to exist, there be not such a *solid system* (to use Pitt's words) of power and influence, as to be able to counteract all efforts, remains to be seen. I own I have my apprehensions. To look no farther than to our own history for examples, is it not to be apprehended that we are verging every day to that situation in which our ancestors would have been, if James II. had been a member of the Church of England? As to the detail of the business, I am more and more convinced, that if we are not strong enough to *begin* our operations either in the North, or in the city of London, it is not worth while to begin them at all. I do assure you, my dear Sir, that you owe me no apology for writing to me on these affairs, and, on the contrary, that I feel myself highly obliged by your communications.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Tuesday*.

P. S.—What I hear from other quarters, and especially from Worcestershire, Warwickshire, &c. would only increase your apprehensions of riots and tumults; and even hereabouts,

hereabouts, they say (though I do not quite believe it), that the minds of the common people are in a very bad state.

LETTER XXXI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Dec. 26th*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

MY farther correspondence in Yorkshire, &c. since the date of my last letter, viz. Nov. 22d, has convinced me, that there must be a much greater revolution of opinions than has yet been experienced, before it will be practicable to carry with proper effect a question for the dismissal of ministers at a meeting of this county: I believe, I may also add, Durham and Northumberland. But the result of my inquiries has equally convinced me, that the wish for peace is become nearly universal, as I had stated it to be, in my letter of the 22d of November. I therefore have changed ground, and proposed to several of our principal friends to consider, whether a question for peace might not be carried with a proper superiority, *either now*, or very probably at least, *when France shall have concluded a separate peace with Austria*. The answers I have received have given no encouragement to make the attempt

immediately. Our best friends—they on whose zeal, integrity, and enlightened understandings, we may most safely rely—all assure me, that *the time is not come yet.* But they hope it will come; and that a separate peace upon the Continent will be the event most likely to form the fit juncture for which we have been waiting. It seems probable, that the late successes of the French army under General Moreau, will compel the Emperor speedily to conclude such a peace; it is even more probable, perhaps, that he has already concluded it, or has formed his determination to conclude it immediately. After that event has been notified in England, and its consequences has been reflected on, for a short time, we in Yorkshire, I hope, will no longer hesitate to hold a previous meeting of our friends at York, to collect and consolidate our strength, and to determine on the question for calling a general meeting of the county to petition for peace.

As this question will very materially change the ground, which was supposed likely to be taken, when I wrote to you on the 2d of November, it is necessary to consider, whether this change will not render some change of conduct, respecting the subject of reform, expedient, if not absolutely indispensable. And I must frankly acknowledge, that the question for peace appears to have a far remoter tendency to promote the reformation of parliament, than that for the dismissal of ministers. This latter question, in the present state of politics, has a tendency

so

so direct to produce that necessary reformaton, that we (i. e. the decided friends of reform) might well be content with carrying that question, unaccompanied with any resolution expressly referring to the correction of abuses in the frame or duration of parliament. This, I believe, was sufficiently explained in my letter of the 2d of November; and on the grounds there stated, the most zealous friends of reformation in the case supposed, would have had no reason to complain that the interests of the constitution, and the cause of reform, had been neglected, or not sufficiently secured. In fact, the measure proposed was, in the circumstances alluded to, what I apprehended to be the best and most immediate way of serving the great cause we are engaged in: and I should have thought of it in the same manner, if all conciliatory views had been out of the question. But when the subsisting prejudices of the times compel us to abandon that question for the present, and to hold up peace as the only object of county petitions, the interest of our cause seems to require, not only that the danger of the constitution, and the means of saving it, should be insisted on, in the speeches of our friends, but that some resolution tending to bring these topics under discussion in a subsequent meeting, should be proposed.* It

* In this opinion of the editor, Mr. Fox concurred, in that passage of letter 33, which, for reasons of a personal nature, it was thought right to omit; and to mention the omission in the note subjoined to letter 27.

was thus Yorkshire proceeded in the years 1779 and 1780. The petition adopted in 1779 struck only at sinecure places, unmerited pensions, &c.: but the meeting resolved to consider the most effectual way of correcting abuses of the constitution, and appointed a meeting, in 1780, to determine upon an association to support the necessary reforms. I do not mean to suggest, that it would be proper to proceed this winter in a manner exactly similar. The cases are not exactly similar in all their bearings. But there is a sufficient resemblance, perhaps, to authorize the inference I would draw; which is, that if peace must be the only prayer of our first petition, the success of our struggle for the ultimate object of our views may be promoted in 1801, as it was before promoted in 1780: viz. by forming a committee to report to a subsequent meeting, what it may be expedient to propose in petition to parliament, or otherwise, for restoring our *recently invaded rights*, and also introducing an *effectual improvement of the constitution*. Or, if from the strength of existing prejudices the meeting could not be thought disposed to adopt such propositions; if it were even imprudent to bring them forward in motions, still it might be prudent and proper, after the petition for peace was carried, to state the enormous influence of the crown, the degraded condition of parliament, and the hostility of ministers to popular rights; as reasons for vigilance on the part of the people; and for their fixing another meeting of the county

county, at no great distance of time, to consider what may be proper measures, on the very supposable event, of the crown being advised to reject their petition for peace.

These, and many other measures, which it would be quite superfluous to detail, the friends of parliamentary reformation, in the case of a petition for peace only, may wish to bring forward, after that measure has been carried. I feel that it would be rashness in me now to give any such assurance as, for the sake of conciliation, I ventured to give before—that little would be said, and nothing moved, on the subject of reform. On being compelled to take the narrow ground of peace only, the party for reform would wish to have their movements upon it free, and themselves at liberty to take advantage of the temper of the meeting, to do what may be best calculated to promote the success of political reformation. This alone I should dare to say, that, on this new ground being taken, I conceive no question of reform would be brought forward for immediate discussion; and if any such question should be proposed, it certainly should meet with my strenuous opposition at this first meeting. So far I should be willing, even on this new and much narrowed question, to pledge myself; if the pledge of an individual like me, unconnected, unauthorised, and totally unimportant, could be supposed to have the remotest tendency to re-unite the highly respected Lord Fitzwilliam with the popular party in Yorkshire. I know their sentiments;

I think I know them well. I may be liable to err however, in presuming to say what, on any supposed contingency, their future sentiments or feelings may be. But, allowing for that liability, I think there would be little risk of a mistake, if I were to assert, that the co-operation of Lord Fitzwilliam with the popular party in Yorkshire, in promoting a petition for peace, and assenting to resolutions, tending to secure the discussion of recent encroachments, or more ancient abuses of the constitution, at a subsequent meeting, would justly intitle him to receive, and certainly would produce that high degree of respect and grateful attachment which his much-honoured uncle experienced. I may with still greater confidence assure you, that if Lord Fitzwilliam sees the danger of public liberty in the same light as you do; if he is, like you, convinced that a statesman who would save the constitution must consent to a radical reform; and if he would consequently support the friends of reform in Yorkshire, on the guarded principles you have laid down, such conduct would make a still deeper impression on their hearts; it would secure to him that unbounded trust, that never-ceasing veneration, with which the gentlemen of Yorkshire, by the similar conduct of Sir G. Savile, were inspired for him.

I am, dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

C. WYVILL.

The Hon. C. J. Fox.

LETTER

LETTER XXXII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan. 8th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE very lately received from Mr. T. Bigge, an extract of a letter to him from Mr. Grey, relative to a county meeting in Yorkshire, and the means of conciliating the concurrence of Lord Fitzwilliam; and also expressing the wish of Mr. Grey, that I would communicate to him my opinion on the subject. By yesterday's post, I sent my answer to Mr. Grey; in which I informed him, that the subject of a county meeting had been discussed with you, and with the principal friends of liberty in Yorkshire; and also, that several letters had been written to you, on the means of obtaining, through your interposition, the co-operation of Lord Fitzwilliam. After stating generally what had passed, and the necessity for pausing a little, in compliance with the cautious opinions of our friends, and the expectation of an increase of strength in a short time, I told Mr. Grey, that the question for peace, as it appeared to me from his encouraging letter, might be laid aside altogether; but that the union of Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Dundas, and their friends, with the other friends of liberty in Yorkshire, for the purpose of proposing

at a county meeting a petition for the removal of ministers, would afford, *at a proper time*, such a well-grounded hope of success as ought to be acted on. And *that proper time*, I conceive, would be arrived, when the separate peace of Austria has been notified: or, should the Northern Powers declare war against England, a similar effect would be produced; and we might safely bring forward our pacific appeal to the people.

This answer may possibly appear to you not perfectly consistent with what I before have said, in different letters to yourself, particularly in the last, dated Dec. 26th. But I think we may calculate, that the events above-mentioned will certainly make a great impression on the public mind; and that Lord Fitzwilliam, with his friends, by declaring with us, for a removal of ministers, *at that time*, will be able, in Yorkshire, to effect that revolution of opinion, which would secure to us a proper superiority at a county meeting. It is impossible to obtain certainty in such conjectural calculations; but I know that there is great distress and uneasiness every where, particularly in the towns; I know that the harshness of the measures enforced for some years has compelled the people to suppress their sentiments on public affairs; and, consequently, that when a proper leading shall appear, they will be encouraged to speak out, and will afford us a support beyond what may be supposed at present. And on those grounds, I think, we might and ought to make the attempt in Yorkshire;

Yorkshire; I think it likely to succeed; I think, even if it did not succeed, it would be attended with some important advantage (on the supposition of union with Lord Fitzwilliam, on the plan mentioned to you, and to Mr. Grey); but I am not sanguine enough to engage for more than this; though I am desirous that a meeting should take place, and though I am willing, with others, to encounter the utmost rage and rancour of our opponents; which Mr. Pitt and Mr. Wilberforce may be expected to inflame to the greatest possible degree. I foresee it, and yet I am ready, with the united assistance that is looked for, to renew the application to our friends, not fearing but that we shall be able, at *a proper time*, now near approached, either to carry our points in the manner we wish, or, at least, to lay the foundation for our future and complete success. But secrecy, I conceive, to be very necessary, and particularly, that nothing ought to be suffered to transpire, till a previous meeting of the country gentlemen have resolved on the requisition for a meeting. For with that measure I should wish to begin, when the main business has been settled with Lord Fitzwilliam, and the notification of an Austrian peace with France has brought forward the crisis so often alluded to.

I dare say, Mr. Grey will immediately confer with you upon this subject, and I thought it proper therefore, without loss of time, to inform

inform you what has passed, and to explain some points which seemed to require it.

I am ever, dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XXXIII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE to return you my thanks for your two letters, and for the copy of the Leeds resolutions, which I did not receive so soon as I should otherwise have done, owing to my having been upon a visit in Sussex, from whence I did not return till yesterday. I begin at last to think that the event you speculate upon, I mean the separate peace with Austria, is certain, and will take place immediately, if it has not taken place already; but whether Mr. Pitt may not endeavour to parry an attack upon the subject of peace by some pretended negotiation, or at least some step towards one, remains to be seen. Perhaps, therefore, the less delay there may be in calling the previous meeting (after the separate peace is ascertained), the better.

Whether the present situation of the country

try will call out the energy of the people, I know not. But if it does not, it is clear that nothing can. As to the minister himself, if the stocks continue to fall, that will have more effect upon him than any thing else. I should suppose, one may take for granted, that the spirit which has shewn itself in Leeds, is likely to be prevalent in other manufacturing towns in Yorkshire,

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Friday, Jan. 23d, 1801.

LETTER XXXIV.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Jan. 27th,* 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE requisition on the other side has been signed by a few gentlemen in this neighbourhood, and will be signed by several more, I believe in a day or two. When ten or a dozen have signed, it will be sent without delay to Mr. Wrightson, who was authorised by the last meeting to call another meeting for this purpose, of applying to the

the Sheriff to convene the county. I hope the measure may succeed: I think that there will be no hesitation to call the previous meeting, when Mr. Wrightson is thus applied to. The requisition is worded so as to leave it undecided, whether peace or the dismissal of ministers is to be the object of the petition; which I hope you will approve.

I am, dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER XXXV.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE just received your note of the 27th, and if you think the proper time for proceeding is arrived, I shall perfectly confide in your judgement, though I confess that there appears a supineness in this part of the country that is not encouraging; and indeed with regard to Yorkshire, though Mr. Oates, in transmitting to me the Leeds resolutions, intimated that they would in all probability be speedily followed by similar proceedings in other manufacturing towns, nothing of the sort has appeared in the newspaper.

Mr.

Mr. Grey was prevented from coming hither on Sunday, as he had intended, by indisposition, but he sent me your letter.

Perhaps after all, if the people of Yorkshire are ready to join *heartily* for the removal of ministers, reform of parliament is so sure a consequence of success in that point, that it may not be necessary to have any formal proceeding relative to it even, at a second meeting. But it is without affectation that I say, I feel my own opinion upon points of this sort to be very little worth.

The country seems to me in a state perfectly incomprehensible. The ministry apparently low in the public opinion, but no great anxiety to remove them. A wish for peace almost universal, yet scarce any step taken to obtain it.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Friday, Jan. 30th, 1801.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 2d*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

THIS morning I received yours, of the 30th of January, to which, being pressed in time, I will defer my answer till Wednesday. Nothing, however, shall be determined, with respect to the requisition, till we can be favoured with your opinion.

The change of administration, announced in our newspapers of this day, is what I did not expect, though I had heard somewhat of another political intrigue being carried on similar to that some years ago. What the arrangement of this new administration may be, I know not. I imagine, it will neither satisfy nor discourage the friends of liberty. I hope that neither this, nor any other arrangement, exclusive of you and your friends, will be of long duration.

I am ever, dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVII.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Feb. 4th,* 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE reported change in the administration, which the newspapers so confidently asserted, is this day contradicted; and matters stand in nearly the same situation, as before that report.

I now proceed to inclose a list of names annexed to the requisition; which was obtained last week; and which appeared to myself and the friends who saw it, to be as respectable a signature as could be expected, or would be necessary. In consequence of this powerful support in this part of Yorkshire, the requisition would have been sent immediately to Mr. Wrightson, had it not occurred, that in a case of so much importance, and at a time when considerable discouragement still damps the zeal and activity of our friends, it would be prudent first to ascertain, what support might be depended on, in the event of a county meeting, from the trading interest in the West. With this view, letters have been written to Messrs. Linsley, Hamer Oates, and my worthy friend, Mr. Wood, at Leeds. Their answers I expected to-day, but their not arriving, I suppose, may be owing to the extraordinary report on

Monday last. They will arrive, I dare say, in a day or two, and should they contain an assurance of support, either to a question for the removal of Ministers, or to one for peace, from a majority of the traders in the West, I think the opportunity should not be lost. Yet, as disputes appear to have taken place in the cabinet, and probably still subsist, though they have been productive of no change of Ministers, it may be politic, in your opinion, to suspend county meeting for a short time; and I request your answer, whether any reason appears to you to exist, from the state of cabal and intrigue in your neighbourhood, which renders a pause advisable. If that should be your opinion, the requisition shall be kept back. But if no such reason seems to you to forbid our coming forward, the requisition will be sent immediately to Mr. Wrightson, provided the answers from Leeds should have been as encouraging as we hope they will be, and our principal friends in this neighbourhood should have given their approbation.

I am glad Lord F— has not been written to, &c. As we are now circumstanced, I agree with you in thinking it better delayed, till the call of a previous meeting has taken place. Before the end of this, I will again write to explain, why the terms of conciliation formerly mentioned cannot well be departed from. At present, I am so much pressed in time, that I will only add, that I rejoice to find your opinion respecting the claims of this country, as of *late exercised*

towards

towards the shipping of neutral powers, is, that they are unjust, and not to be supported, as a cause of war, in any circumstances; but least of all in the present most calamitous state of the country. I think your opposition to these claims entirely accords with the rest of your beneficent system of politics; it is agreeable to justice and reason; and it is advantageous to the best interests of the country, to its liberty, and to the speedy restoration of peace. I had great pleasure to day, on hearing from Lord Stanhope, that his sentiments on this subject are the same as yours.

I am, dear Sir,
With the greatest truth,
Yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

The Hon. C. J. Fox.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I AM glad to see Wakefield and Bradford have followed Leeds. The division in the House of Commons was full as good, and that in the Lords, far better than I expected; but I think it a bad symptom, that no new person in the House of Commons should have declared himself, in debate I mean, for as to the members who composed

the division, I do not yet know who they were. From general report, it seems as if Portugal and her trade would soon be added to the catalogue of our losses. I know, from what passed at the time of the commercial treaty with France, that this branch most materially affects Yorkshire, and should therefore suppose that this event, if it happen, will add to the discontents of your countrymen.

Now I have given you all the information in my power, it must rest entirely with your judgment, and that of your friends, how far it is prudent to proceed or to delay. Whatever is decided, I shall think it for the best; but of this I am sure, that unless Yorkshire, or the corporation of London, of which I have little hope, lead the way, it would do no good, and even some harm, to stir in other counties and places.

Yours ever,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Wednesday, Feb. 4th, 1801.

P. S.—It may be necessary to add, that Pitt appeared to be unusually dejected, and that there is reason to believe, that there has been some pretty serious difference between him, and either the K—g, or his colleagues, upon the subject of the emancipation of the Catholics. I suppose that he has submitted, and that nothing is to be done in the business, but this is only guess.

That Lord Cornwallis was strongly engaged

gaged to the Catholics, I have little doubt; but what conduct he may hold, remains to be seen.

LETTER XXXIX.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I WRITE chiefly to let you know, that when I wrote yesterday, I had not received yours of the 2d, which came to me this morning. It is impossible for me to judge, in regard to the prudence of issuing the requisition. On the one hand, I believe, from some things I have heard, that many counties are ready enough just at present, to follow, if Yorkshire takes the lead; but, on the other, an unsuccessful attempt in Yorkshire might do much mischief. Whether there be any danger of an attempt being *now* unsuccessful, I can by no means judge, but from what has passed in the West-Riding, I should be inclined to think *not*.

I have learned nothing further, respecting the supposed differences in the cabinet.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Thursday, Feb. 5th, 1801.

LETTER XL.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 5th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

FEW events respecting individuals only appear more important, than the reunion of Lord Fitzwilliam with the independent gentlemen of Yorkshire. I should be very happy, if any thing I could suggest, on the present occasion, should fortunately contribute to so desirable an event, which I think would not only give us a most decided superiority in favour of peace, at a meeting of this county, but would tend very much to prevent jealousies in other parts of the kingdom, and facilitate their concurrence with Yorkshire. And if a revolution can be prevented, if the constitution can be preserved, or restored on its genuine principles, these can only be the consequences of such a timely and general union.

What was mentioned in my former letters to you, with a view to forward a conciliation so much to be wished, has been imparted only to my most confidential friends. It has met their approbation; but it is their opinion, that less could not have been offered, without injuring the cause of reform, and incurring the displeasure of its truest friends. We naturally wish not only to act with consistency,

ency, but to preserve the appearance of it; that we may be the more able to serve the public, not only the cause of reform, but the general interest of the nation. It is highly probable, that great distractions are about to arise in this country; and a party may start up, perhaps, in greater force than many suspect, who may support reform on extreme principles. And though revolution may not be the object of some of the gentlemen alluded to, it will be the certain consequence, I apprehend, of their success in carrying the generality of the towns, and particularly the capital into their measures. The best way to prevent it, the most likely to succeed and yet not injure liberty, is the formation of a party, in favour of moderate reform, strong enough to present to the party for universal suffrage, a prospect of a substantial reform being obtained without their risking a revolution. This has been the great object of your labours for many years. In Yorkshire, such a party already exists; though now dispersed, they will, I trust, be re-united soon; and by their consistently supporting reform, at the intended county meetings, at the 2d at least, they will preserve that credit with the more eager reformers, which will facilitate your success, and at the same time tend to prevent a revolution.

This, I consider, as one great and leading object with Lord Fitzwilliam. He may be assured it is the same with those with whom I have acted in Yorkshire. I trust I need not make many professions for myself. I

will only say, that meaning, in every possible event, in this eventful time, to stand or fall with the constitution, I think the conduct I have stated to you in my former letters, is what will best enable me to be of use in Yorkshire, and my old associates, when re-united, to be of use, by their extensive credit, in the kingdom at large. I most earnestly wish these reasons may appear satisfactory to you, and that Lord Fitzwilliam himself may also approve them.

I am, dear Sir,
With the highest esteem and regard,
Yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

P. S.—I have received one letter from Leeds this morning: viz. from Mr. Wood. He thinks a few weeks will bring the temper of that part of Yorkshire to the point we wish; but from what he says of the extreme distress there, and the universality of the wish for peace, I am decided in my opinion, that we may safely proceed now. The Leeds petition has been signed by many, he says, lately friends to the war. The plan of policy of some of our friends seems to be, to wait till these late warm friends of war will agree to come forward, *generally*, as the movers of a county meeting for peace. And they fear the motion, originating with men uniformly adverse to the war, will terrify these new converts to peace, back to Pitt and his measures. But the distress is too severely felt, I apprehend, for that effect to follow from

from a requisition such as that proposed. And the consequences to be feared from our delay, till such persons chuse to come forward, are I think obvious enough: viz. we may wait till the proper season is past, till Pitt is able to compose all differences in the cabinet; *or having concluded a peace,** may dissolve the parliament; or may gull the nation with another pretended negociation: and we should certainly wait, only to let the friends of the Minister take the lead in the meeting, and model their measures to his satisfaction.

I therefore am decidedly, for sending the requisition to Mr. Wrightson, without farther loss of time: if from your answer to my last, I find you see no objection from the state of politics in your neighbourhood.

2*d*. P. S.—I hope what is said of re-uniting my old friends and associates, cannot be understood as if it was meant to revive the late association, or to propose any similar measure at either the first, or the second of the intended meetings. But I think it may be proper to declare expressly, *that* is not what I should think of doing: I mean no such thing at either of those meetings.

* The words printed in Italics, being necessary to complete the meaning of this passage, have been inserted by the editor.

LETTER XLI.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED yesterday and to-day, yours of the 4th and 5th, and with regard to the question, which you most particularly put to me, whether any of the intrigues actually going forward, or supposed to be so, afford in my judgment any reason for delaying the measure of a meeting, I have no hesitation in saying they do *not*. On the contrary, no time appears to me more likely, to enable us to make an impression upon the enemy, than when they are disunited among themselves.—My letters from London say, that Pitt has actually resigned, but though I have it from what I should in most cases deem good authority, I know not how to believe it. The same account says, that the speaker of the House of Commons is charged with the making of a new arrangement. If this is so, I should suspect the whole to be some juggle, which will shortly end in reinstating Pitt himself, if in truth he is gone out at *all*. I am very glad you have consulted the West-Riding gentlemen, and I think their judgment ought to be very much attended to, for, though time is precious, it is of much more importance that the thing should be *well* done than *soon* done. I quite agree with you, that the lead in the business should

should be kept in the hands of the old friends to peace, and not in those of new converts; but yet perhaps the new converts might be so far humoured, as to keep the present meeting as separate and unconnected with former ones, as can be consistently with the circumstances of the same persons taking the lead, and not relinquishing their old ground. I dare say Fitzwilliam will be pleased at what you say of not reviving *associations*. At present it is by no means necessary or advisable; but my opinion, both of the character and of the power of the supporters of the present system, is such, that I suspect that not only associations, but associations of the strongest kind, will be necessary to carrying any thing effectual against them. I am much mistaken if you do not find the coalition between corruption and toryism, headed by the court, much stronger than is generally imagined. With respect to the strength of any of the more violent reformers, I confess I do not think much of it, but it is nevertheless necessary to take as many of that sort as really mean well to the country with us as possible. I am very glad my opinions, with respect to the neutral question, met with your approbation. It is not impossible, but I may feel myself obliged to go to the House, to explain them more at large, but I rather think not.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours ever,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Sunday, Feb. 8th, 1801.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 8th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE the pleasure to inform you, that, by this day's post, the requisition will be sent to Mr. Wrightson, with the unanimous approbation of my friends in this neighbourhood; who agree with me in thinking the moment favourable, and that no time ought to be lost, in bringing forward the intended meeting of the county. With respect to the result, I feel little anxiety, though fully sensible of the responsibility under which I act, and the national importance of the measure determined. I will very shortly take an opportunity to explain myself, as the tone of this letter is undoubtedly very different from that of some which lately preceded it, and which were written at a time when I felt myself a good deal embarrassed.

I suppose the previous meeting will be held about the 24th of February, and the county will probably be called together about the 10th of March.

I venture to assure you, that we shall succeed; but it is upon the supposition so often mentioned, that the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Thanet, and our other principal friends, will personally assist; the assistance of Lord Fitzwilliam,

Fitzwilliam, above all, will be of most essential service; though I hope the sense of the county is so decidedly with us, that even his absence would not prevent our having a great preponderance in the meeting.

I am, with great regard, dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

The Hon. C. J. Fox.

LETTER XLIII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I AM very glad you are so sanguine about the meeting, and do not think that the change of ministers (for such it now appears really to be) ought to prevent your going on. As to the particular propositions to be made at the *county* meeting, it may make some alteration from the former plan necessary, but I will write to you more at large, upon this part of the subject, when I shall have seen Mr. Grey (which will be shortly), and when it is more certainly known how the new Ministry will be composed, and better seen what is its complexion.

All my letters agree in saying, that Pitt's friends are, in private conversation, loud against Addington, whence they infer reasonably

sonably enough, that it is not all a mere juggle, as was at first, and by myself among others, suspected.

I am, with great regard, dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Thursday, Feb, 12th, 1801.

P. S.—Your letter which I received this morning, was of the 8th, which I mention, because lately it has happened to me, more than once, not to receive my letters on the proper day.

LETTER XLIV.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Feb. 12th,* 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE event I apprehended some time ago, has now occurred, rather unexpectedly. The requisition for a previous meeting has been stopt by the West-Riding gentlemen. I inclose my answer of this day's date, to Mr. Milnes; and I believe it will sufficiently explain this difference of opinion, and also, why I expressed myself more confidently in my letter of the 8th of February; after having, in some preceeding letters, expressed my fears. I thought the unanimous concurrence

rence of our friends, in this part of Yorkshire, by encouraging our friends in the West, would have prevented the step which has been taken.

I am, dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

The Hon. C. J. Fox.

LETTER XLV.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Feb.* 13*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I WRITE a few lines, merely to explain, why the requisition was sent to Mr. Wrightson on the 8th instant, without waiting for the answer I had requested of you, to my question respecting intrigues supposed to be going on, as a possible objection in your judgment to our proposed measure. Your letter of the 5th instant, though it was written chiefly on the subject of our intended meeting, said nothing on the subject of these intrigues. I consulted my friends, and they thought with me, that as you mentioned none, none could exist, which you could think formed an objection to this undertaking. We therefore thought it best to send it immediately, not to lose time, especially as

as the appearance of the advertisement in the York papers might have been stopt, if your answer of the 8th instant had been directly the reverse of what it was.

This is sufficient, I hope, to explain our seeming inattention to advice we had asked; and than which none could have greater weight with my friends as well as,

Dear Sir,

Your most faithful servant,

C. WYVILL.

P. S.—By letters received, since the above was written, I am enabled to say, our affairs in this county will not receive any detriment from the late momentary difference of opinion; at least my assurance of it seems next to a certainty. Their aspect improves daily.

LETTER XLVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 15th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

IT is with the utmost satisfaction I inform you, that this morning I received a letter from Mr. Milnes, which has quite removed my fears, that the change proposed by him and Mr. Wrightson, in our mode of proceeding

ing, might be detrimental to liberty. I was apprehensive that some restriction might have been agreed to, which I could not approve, from a view of gaining a greater concurrence of opinion from the West-Riding. I find with very great pleasure that my apprehensions were totally groundless. The first requisition has been set aside, and another, which I sent on Friday to Mr. Milnes, has been adopted instead of it, and will be sent to the High Sheriff, requesting him to call a county-meeting, for the purpose of petitioning the Throne for a speedy peace. On this ground, and in this mode of proceeding, we shall undoubtedly be very strong: more so, I admit, than if a previous meeting had been held. We must do the best we can to lead our new allies into the measures tending to promote liberty. I think my letter of the 8th instant must have been detained at the Post-office.

I am ever, with the highest regard,
Dear Sir,
Most truly yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER XLVII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED yesterday yours of the twelfth. Grey, who was with me, did not seem to think the consequence of the meeting being called in the manner now proposed to be so prejudicial to the cause as you seem to do. With regard to myself, I think, whether it will be so or not, depends in a great measure upon the points which you state in your letter to Mr. Milnes. If there is to be a stipulation against all censure of ministers, the meeting will indeed be nugatory; with respect to the adjournment to a day fixed, I am inclined to think that it is a measure that will give more alarm than it is worth; for if men's minds are properly disposed, you can always call a second meeting, and if they are not so disposed, such a meeting will not be attended in a manner to give it weight.

The general opinion of well-informed persons in London, is that this change is not the mere juggle which some appearances would lead one to think it. It is, I believe, quite certain, that the dispute on the King's part was serious, and even warm in the expression; and it is said, the persons high in your profession,

profession, are endeavouring by sermons, &c. to raise the old high-church cry every where

I am, dear Sir,

Yours ever,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Monday, Feb. 6th, 1801.

LETTER XLVIII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

My dear Sir,

I AM to thank you for yours of the 14th and 15th, which I received yesterday and to-day. I saw yesterday the Duke of Norfolk, who is still colder about a Yorkshire meeting than I could wish; my opinion is, that nothing would so much encourage him and induce him to attend it, as if he were given to understand, that the tide was, in fact, more turned than he believes it to be, and that he and other of our friends who may be present, were likely to be universally, or at least generally, popular at the meeting. I give you this hint, in case you can make any use of it. I believe Lord Thanet, whom I have not seen, is quite ready to do all that is right.

Yours ever,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Wednesday, Feb. 18th, 1801.

LETTER XLIX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb.* 19*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I AM extremely sorry to inform you, that I have just received a letter from Mr. Milnes, stating that the gentlemen of his neighbourhood, who had met at Fryston yesterday, had given it as "their decided opinion, and that of all they had conversed with, that we ought to delay calling the county meeting until the new administration have declared their intention," meaning, with respect to peace. They seem to have been led to form this opinion, by the rumours circulated, that the new administration will negotiate, and are disposed to make peace on as humiliating terms as the nation would submit to.

How long this indecision will operate to prevent a county meeting, I know not. But I am apprehensive, it will tend greatly to damp the spirit of liberty in this part of the country; and the present opportunity to come forward with effect, seems likely to be lost. I think I may venture to add, the reverse must have been the consequence if the previous meeting had taken place. It would have encouraged the timid and indecisive; by showing a considerable accession of strength at the meeting, and they would have found themselves

themselves unembarrassed by any specific measure, as the object of their petition; and free to proceed as the actual circumstances at the time might have appeared to require.

I now wish most sincerely that the proposal to meet had never been made by me.

I am, with the greatest regard,
Dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER L.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I AM much concerned at the contents of yours of the 19th, which I have this day received. I am afraid the fair interpretation of this squeamishness is, that the county is not so thoroughly turned, with respect to the general measures of government, as we had flattered ourselves. Even, if peace were the sole object, I cannot conceive that any men can be so infatuated, as not to see that a warm expression of the wish of Yorkshire, in its favour, would confirm and hearten the new ministry in the pursuit of it, upon the supposition of their being already disposed to it, and upon the contrary supposition such an

expression would be admitted to be still more necessary. I have no doubt, but the new men will make some attempt at negotiation, though there is no authority but the most vague rumour at present, for their having as yet done any thing in it. (My opinion too is, that Bonaparte will give them peace, if they will give up the point of the armed neutrality to the Northern nations; but whether or not they will have the good sense to do this, I know not, nor even whether they would be allowed to do so by the influence which was strong enough to resist the measure of Catholic emancipation.) I am not sure that, if I had not engaged myself, your account of what has passed in Yorkshire, would not have made me stay away, even from Mr. Grey's motion; but I have promised. Is it your opinion that the high church cry is like to have much effect in Yorkshire? I am sanguine enough to think, it will not have a great deal here, but some it will have.

Yours ever,

C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Sunday*.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 24th*, 1801.

My dear Sir,

I SEE no probability that the new Ministers will declare themselves averse to peace. Whether they will offer a negociation or not, is a matter absolutely uncertain at present; and this uncertainty may remain, till the favourable opportunity for county meetings may be lost. On these grounds, I have thought that the second requisition might be amended, and the dilemma which now perplexes our friends might be avoided, as you will find it in the copy, which is inclosed. I sent it yesterday to Mr. Milnes and Mr. Wrightson, assuring them, that if they and their friends in the West liked it, I could say with confidence, that it would be readily adopted in the North.

I shall think it fortunate, if this proposal meets their approbation and concurrence, but I own I have some doubts. Had the previous meeting been held, this would have been the day of meeting; and I believe, such a requisition as this amended one would have been easily carried at it; and our affairs in Yorkshire would have been likely to prosper. If the amended requisition is not ac-

ceded to; I think we may expect a long delay; or perhaps some nugatory measure at the approaching assizes. I should be truly happy to find my apprehensions were ungrounded.

I am, dear Sir,
With the greatest regard, yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER LII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 25th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE just received Mr. Milnes's answer to my letter which accompanied the amended requisition. The whole tenor of it confirms your suspicion, in yours of the 22d instant, "that the county is not so thoroughly turned, with respect to the general measures of government, as we had flattered ourselves." Mr. Milnes assures me, "it is thought by our friends in this (the West) part of the country, that if Mr. Wrightson had called the meeting at York, and the requisition to the sheriff had sprung from that meeting, although we had made all the exertion in our power, we should have experienced a defeat nearly as decisive as we did in 1795."

He afterwards admits that there is certainly great change of opinion about the war,

war, amongst the manufacturers at Leeds, Bradford, and Wakefield." I do not think he supposition in the former, and the assertion in the latter sentence, are perfectly reconcileable. Yet it is sufficiently clear, that our friends in that part of the county which is most populous, are now quite against meeting; and they must be admitted to know the sentiments of that district better than we. I therefore think that nothing in favour of *Peace and Liberty* can be expected from Yorkshire, for some considerable length of time. I am extremely sorry for it, and heartily wish favourable appearances had not induced me to make this attempt. Parties whether in a nation or a county, like troops, beaten and dispirited, are apt to quarrel among themselves, and confidence is lost by ill success. You may depend, dear Sir, upon this assurance, however, that neither the inconvenience alluded to, nor any other consideration shall prevent my utmost exertions, as far as health at my age will permit, whenever a more fit opportunity shall present itself.

I defer answering several particulars in your letters, for want of time, to-day; I will only say at present, I am glad you mean to attend parliament, in support of Mr. Grey's motion.

I am, with the greatest regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Feb. 26th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

THIS morning I received Mr. Wrightson's answer to the proposal of an amended requisition. He approves the purport of the amendment, but wishes a verbal correction or two to be made, to which I have readily acceded. Thus corrected, he seems to think it may be agreed to, at the approaching assizes, where many of our friends will be upon the grand jury. This affords a hope that Yorkshire,, after all the difficulties we have met, may yet petition. But Mr. Milnes's letter will not allow us to be very sanguine; it can be but a faint hope indeed. I hope however, and trust, that the same goodwill as before may be preserved.

I am, dear Sir,

Most truly yours,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER LIV.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE been so busy ever since I have been in town, and indeed so uncertain with regard to any intelligence I could send you, that I have deferred, from day to day, thanking you for your different communications. I am very sorry the petitioning business has failed, but if the failure of it be owing solely to the particular state of affairs here, perhaps when they are more settled the plan may be resumed The K—g is certainly much better, so much so, that I believe really (according to the words of to-day's bulletin) hopes are entertained of a speedy recovery. My opinion is, that the new Ministers will, as soon as they are fairly in office, attempt a negociation; but I think it very doubtful whether they will attempt peace in a way likely to succeed. I shall go to St. Anne's Hill on Monday, where I shall stay till Grey's motion, which I think will hardly be made sooner than Monday se'nnight.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

Thomas's Hotel, *Saturday.*

LETTER

LETTER LV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

YORK, *March* 12*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE intended conference will be to-morrow. As it is not a post day, I cannot inform you of the result till Saturday. I can at present say little, having only seen two or three of our friends. But that little is favourable. I have better hopes than when I left Burton.

I am, with great regard, dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER LVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

YORK, *March* 13*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE the satisfaction to inform you, that it was agreed here to-day to proceed to a county meeting, immediately after Mr. Grey's motion, if in the course of the debate upon it, nothing shall have appeared to render

der the measure unadvisable. I imagine it is scarcely possible that any impediment can then have arisen to prevent the meeting. But it would not only be satisfactory to us all to know that in your judgment, there was no substantial reason against proceeding; but it would be of great use to inspire confidence, where hitherto timidity has prevailed; I mean, among our friends at Leeds.

This determination is more than I expected yesterday. I trust it will be firmly adhered to, and, in that case, I think we shall succeed. The corrected requisition will be made use of; which will afford all the ground we ought perhaps to think of occupying.

I am ever, dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER LVII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *March* 18*th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

IN one of your letters of a late date, you inquired whether our opponents had been endeavouring to raise the high church cry in the country; and whether such an attempt were likely to succeed. I can now answer with

with some confidence, from my own observation, and from information obtained at York, that the slightest trace of such an attempt is scarcely discovered; and that we have little to fear from high church bigotry, should the industry of our adversaries be employed in earnest, to work upon the passions of the clergy and their adherents! Among the parochial clergy of the country, many are inclined to toleration; while those of a less liberal disposition have not credit enough with the gentry, or the inferior classes, to raise a clamour against either the principle or the friends of toleration. In fact, that fiery zeal for the church establishment, which formerly moved a very powerful engine in politics, is now nearly extinct. It is really felt by some of the clergy; and it may be affected by more, if the bishops should exert their influence, to defend themselves, by the usual means, from the dangers of religious liberty. But the laity, I think, are not disposed to join them on the ground of persecution. They are tired of religious disputes: they manifest little zeal for the church, as a particular mode of Christianity; and if for a time they should support the bishops, it will not be from any decided partiality to their creeds and ceremonies, but from the dread of popular innovation in the state, with all its imagined consequences of plunder and confiscation, a degraded nobility, and a subverted throne. On the part of the generality of our gentry, it will be an opposition without any mixture of religious heat; it will be merely a political opposition;

opposition; and therefore, of course, it will be less formidable. It may be overcome, I trust, by the vigour and moderation of the popular party; and it must yield to general distress, and the urgent necessity of the times. Were the prospect different, had we the same enthusiasm for the church to contend with, which drove James from the throne, and nearly reversed the revolution it had effected, I should think it a hopeless attempt to defend the constitution on its true principles. I do admit, however, that such enthusiasm still exists, as an exception to the general indifference on the subject of our state religion. It may be found in our manufacturing towns; which abound with persons of different sects, sometimes approaching nearly to an equality with the churchmen. This nearly equal proportion occasions contests, competitions, and consequent animosity; which afford fit fuel, when the clergy wish to inflame their people. Of this, Birmingham has afforded a shocking instance: and Manchester, Leeds, &c. were agitated at the time alluded to, by a spirit of persecution almost as violent. Hence at present the timidity, as I conjecture, of many of our friends at Leeds, Wakefield, and other great towns in the West of Yorkshire. For the most part they are Dissenters; they are a minority in the respective towns: and for the last seven years, particularly in 1795, they have experienced from their high church opponents, the utmost rage and rancour. They have long had before their eyes the fate of

Priestley

Priestley and Russell; which, during some part of this time, was very near becoming their own. And thus they have been intimidated to such a degree, that they hardly dare to look their opponents in the face, even at this time, when commercial distress has brought over to their opinions, respecting peace at least, a great majority of their neighbours. That distress is rapidly increasing; it must finally subdue the bigotry of the most obstinate zealots for war, and convince the most apprehensive of our dissenting friends, that they must seek their safety, not in timid submission and inaction, at this crisis*, but in boldly standing forward, putting themselves at the head of those thirty thousand manufacturers who have petitioned for peace, and with them joining the friends of peace in the country, who are at the same time the friends of liberty, civil and religious.

I am, dear Sir,
With great regard, most truly yours,
C. WYVILL.

* In the year 1795, some figurative words in the editor's address to the worthy freeholders of Yorkshire, which is prefixed to the 5th volume, were most ridiculously represented in parliament to be of a treasonable nature. Does any reader suspect that more is meant in the passage now before him, than merely that the dissenters in Yorkshire, in the circumstances alluded to, would probably join in petitions for peace, &c? The editor hopes not. In 1805, however, he cannot think it necessary, by any explanation, to obviate such senseless misconstruction.

LETTER LVIII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED yesterday yours of the 13th, containing what I think very good news. So far am I from seeing any objection to petitioning, from the present state of affairs, that I think it more expedient, if possible, than ever. I think indeed that the new Ministers will make an attempt at negociation, but it will probably fail; and, even if it should succeed, no system either of internal or external politics is likely to be adopted, different from that which has ruined us. Peace in such a case would be of a short duration, and to liberty we may bid adieu for ever. With respect to the terms of the requisition, the more general they are, the better; and it would have certainly a far better effect, that the petition should rather go to the point of men and councils, than be confined to the sole object of peace; but the words in one of the sketches you sent me, appear to me too particular. I have not the paper at this moment before me, but I think it advises his M—y to take such men as have been *uniformly against the war*, or to that effect. This would seem (especially from the circumstance of its being adopted in Yorkshire) particularly hostile to Lord Fitzwilliam, which would not only hurt me personally, but have

a bad effect in a political view. *Persons who have had no share in producing our present calamities,* or *whose principles are known to be hostile to the system so unfortunately pursued by the late administration,* would do better; or, as advice for removal is more strictly constitutional than recommendation of successors, it might go to the removal of persons whose support of the most objectionable measures of the last administration renders them unworthy of the confidence of the public, or *whose known attachment,* or *whose declared attachment to the principles of the late administration, &c.* Perhaps it might do quite generally, *persons in whom the public cannot confide.* One of the principal points to be relied on in speeches, and perhaps in hand-bills (though possibly too particular a one to be mentioned in the petition) is Pitt's declaration that he rejoiced in the failure of former negociations, which, according to him, had been more useful by persuading the people to give their money, than they could have been by producing peace. In this declaration some of the present Ministers explicitly, and all by implication, joined. The folly of real wishers for peace, in trusting such men to negociate, is therefore obvious. Mr. Grey's motion does not come on till this day se'nnight. I should rather have wished the petition to have preceded it; but as that cannot be, there is perhaps some advantage to be derived from the debate to the petitioners, and if any thing of that sort strikes me, I will not fail

fail to communicate it to you. I do not know whether it may be a circumstance of much importance in Yorkshire, but I have reason to think Lord Lansdown is more inclined to act openly and cordially with Opposition, than he has been heretofore. There are many doubts abroad, respecting the degree to which the K—g is recovered, but I have no intelligence upon this subject, upon which I can rely. I hear too that Mr. Wilberforce at last confesses that the distresses, in Yorkshire at least, are principally owing to the war. I go to town on Monday or Tuesday next, where I shall probably stay that week. If you have any thing to communicate while I am in London, be so good as to direct to me, Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley-square.

I am, with great regard, dear Sir,
Yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill,
Wednesday, March 18*th*, 1801.

1*st REQUISITION.*

TO THE HIGH SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.

WE, whose names are subscribed, request you, at as early a day as may be convenient, to call a general meeting of the freeholders of this county, in order that they may have an opportunity to petition the King

for a speedy peace, and that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to remove from his councils, persons in whom the public cannot confide, because it cannot rationally hope that peace on safe and equitable terms can be procured by persons, whose support of all the most objectionable measures, so unfortunately pursued by the late administration, has in a great degree contributed to produce that situation of unexampled calamity into which the country has been thrown.

2d *REQUISITION.*

TO THE HIGH SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.

WE, whose names are subscribed, request you, at as early a day as may be convenient, to call a general meeting of the freeholders of this county, in order that they may have an opportunity to petition the the King for a speedy peace, and that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to remove from his councils, persons in whom the public cannot confide, because they are considered incapable, at this stormy crisis, to conduct the affairs of the nation; and particularly from their having supported all the most objectionable measures unfortunately pursued by the late administration, unable to effect a peace, on safe and equitable terms,

terms, and thus to rescue the country out of that calamitous situation, into which they so greatly contributed to throw it.

LETTER LIX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *March 22d*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I BEG to trouble you with the inclosed sketches of a requisition for your opinion and advice. They are drawn with a view to avoid what you thought objectionable in the former one; but, as the new ministers have yet done nothing in their official capacity on which an accusation could be grounded, I thought it advisable to state reasons why the public could not confide in them. If Mr. Pitt had remained in office, the most general perhaps would have been the best form. But respecting the present ministers, the old question might be asked, "why, what evil have they done?" And it may be expedient thus to answer it by anticipation. But if you think the reasons will be better omitted, I shall most willingly strike out all that follows the word confide. In fact I rather wished to obtain your opinion, than have formed one myself.

I am heartily glad to find you are likely to

be well supported on your next attendance in the House of Commons. I hope county meetings will give an assistance that will ultimately prove decisive.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard,
Most truly yours,
C. WYVILL.

P. S.—On farther consideration, the reasons in each requisition appear expedient, not only because they point the objection against Mr. Addington's remaining in office; but serve also to prevent the return of Mr. Pitt and Dundas. Should no reason be given for the alledged want of confidence in the new Ministers, it would perhaps facilitate the re-appointment of the old. But of this you will best judge.

LETTER LX.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I RECEIVED the day before yesterday yours of the 22d, and to-day another nearly a duplicate of it that had gone to St. Anne's Hill. Our division was not so good as had been expected. The most remarkable circumstance in the debate, appeared to me to be Pitt's laboured panegyric upon the new Ministers, and Addington's studious disclaimer

claimer of being in any degree bound to follow the system of his predecessors. His (Addington's) speech was by no means an able one, but, in some respects, I think judicious; particularly in the disclaimer I have alluded to, and in his very strong expressions for peace. If he had left out one single expression, by which he stated our claims upon the neutral powers to admit of no compromise, I should almost believe that peace would really take place, and whether or not he felt the full force of that expression, and still more whether or not he will adhere to it, may be doubtful. In these circumstances I am afraid the business of petitioning will not go on so smoothly, though if it could go on, it would in my opinion be as desirable as ever. I like No. 2, I think, the best, and perfectly agree with you, that it is necessary to state some reasons for want of confidence. I suppose it would not be easy to get in a sentence, congratulating his Majesty on the removal of Ministers, who have plunged the country in such unexampled calamity; if it could, it would be very desireable on many accounts, and serve to introduce naturally the reasons for removing the present men. I return to St. Anne's Hill, on Sunday.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours ever,

C. J. FOX.

London, *26th March.*.

LETTER LXI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *March 30th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

THE division was less than I expected, yet not much less. It shews clearly the prevalence of corruption, and of principles hostile to liberty. It shews too that the nation has not much to hope from any spontaneous change in parliament, unassisted by popular exertions. For what state of affairs could present circumstances of national distress and alarm, more fit to rouze the energies and dormant patriotism of parliament, in which it would be possible to suppose the people to acquiesce? Yet popular interference may, and I hope will, call forth that patriotism, and those energies of parliament by which alone a revolution can be prevented; but it will be little less than a miracle. There is even greater reason, perhaps, to hope that this marvellous change may be effected by the interposition of the people, from the necessity we are under to defer the attempt. When it is made, I trust, it will be made with greater vigour and more complete success.

I have recommended to our friends in the West to suspend their proceedings, and informed them of your sentiments. Having pressed

pressed for a meeting before, and deprecated delay, I thought it incumbent on me now to acknowledge, that my sentiments are changed, and that I accede to what they proposed at York, viz. to wait till the new Ministers may have negociated, and failed to procure a peace. If Mr. Addington should adhere to his late declaration in the House of Commons on the subject of the Northern claims, we probably shall not be obliged to wait long. We still perhaps may be able to come forward in this session. If the negociation should be drawn into great length, it will be impossible to do so. In that case we must postpone our efforts till next winter, when we may expect to have other, and perhaps still stronger ground to occupy.

I altogether concur with your opinion, that there is no probability at present, that your attendance in parliament would be useful to the public. I therefore hear with pleasure, your determination to return to St. Anne's Hill. I sincerely think it that conduct which is most worthy your character, and most prudent for the cause of the nation.

I am, with great regard, dear Sir,
Most truly yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *April 29th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

I FIND myself frequently obliged to shew our correspondence, with the exception of a few letters, to those who co-operate with us in Yorkshire. On this account I have felt it necessary to make some corrections in my letter to you, of March the 30th, which is not only clumsily written, but inaccurately with respect to what had then lately passed. I think it right to mention this circumstance, as the only instance of alteration in any of my letters; but the corrections alluded to, are too unimportant, to require me to trouble you with a copy of the corrected letter. You are the last man to whose penetration I would willingly expose an inaccurate letter; but when this has been done, though inadvertence, or whatever else might occasion it, you are the last also, from whose candour and good-nature I should fear any severity of censure.

The delay recommended to our western friends, and mentioned in the letter of March 30th, was very cheerfully complied with. You would of course suppose it, and I thought it needless to write merely to communicate that intelligence.

My

My principal object at present is, to inform you, that I have lately heard from the worthy Major Cartwright, that *immense multitudes* are preparing to petition. Four months ago, when there was a prospect of obtaining county meetings for that purpose, I requested Major Cartwright to use his influence with the societies in the great towns, to prevent their coming forward then, and induce them to wait for the counties. And at his suggestion, a delay was yielded at that time. But the bodies alluded to, finding the counties have deferred their measure, will wait no longer. I have in vain requested Major Cartwright to interfere again; and I now understand from him, that they will soon petition, unless prevented by some act of power. I am extremely sorry that our delay in Yorkshire has produced this consequence, which will undoubtedly increase the difficulties attending our pacific plan to secure a well regulated liberty, on the principles of the constitution.

I have also received from MajorCartwright, a printed letter addressed to myself, written on the principles he has long avowed, to recommend the formation of a new society for parliamentary reform. As it will not be published, I hope he may be induced to take less extensive ground; and with that view, I shall write to him soon. You probably may have seen a copy of the letter in question, as I know he sent several copies to the Duke of Bedford. If Mr. Cartwright would adopt the principle of property, combined with

with liberty, as you have done, his projected association might be of great use in London. But we are not yet ready for such a measure in the country.

I am, with the greatest regard,
Dear Sir, yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER LXIII.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *May 27th*, 1801.

Dear Sir,

LAST week a proof copy of my letter to Major Cartwright, was sent by the post to St. Anne's Hill; which I hope you have received. The pamphlet is now printed off, I believe; and about the end of this week, the copies intended for distribution in and near London, will be sent to Mr. Debrett; from whom you will probably receive half-a-dozen very soon after that; which I request you to accept. The rest of the copies, amounting, with those to be sent to London, to 500, will be distributed in Yorkshire. I have ordered a second edition a little enlarged, to be got ready for sale; which sale, however, will not take place, unless you approve the making of this amicable discussion more generally known to the public. In that case,

case, I hope, the most cautious booksellers will make no difficulty to engage as publishers. I thought the piece so clearly legal, that I did not trouble Mr. Erskine for his opinion upon it; as I certainly should, had I seen any reason to doubt.

I am extremely glad that your last speech in parliament has been published; nearly, I imagine, as you delivered it. I find it highly approved by our friends, and wish very much it could be circulated every where.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard,
Most truly yours,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER LXIV.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I OWE you many apologies for not having sooner thanked you for your obliging letter, and its inclosure, in which the way you speak of me is so peculiarly kind and flattering. I approve entirely the whole of the letter, but I doubt first its effect with Major Cartwright, and secondly, whether any good is to be done, even upon the supposition, that he and others like him, should become more reasonable. The deadness with which the last violent measures have been received,

ceived, may I know be accounted for, on principles of terror, in some degree; but I am afraid the indifference of the majority of the public (if not worse than indifference) to the liberty we used to prize and extol, is greater than almost any one could believe or even imagine. However it is not the less meritorious in you, to watch such opportunities as may offer. I am told there was a very animated and well sustained debate in the House of Lords yesterday, on one of the violent bills (I do not know which) in which Lord Thurlow distinguished himself. Whether or not this may, in some degree, call the attension of the public I know not, but I am the very reverse of sanguine.

I am, with great regard,
Dear Sir, yours ever,
C. J. FOX.

St. Anne's Hill, *Thursday.*

P. S.—The taking advantage of the vanity of Sir Charles Grey, in persuading him to accept of a peerage, which, in the common course of things, may soon take his son from the House of Commons, appears to me to be a most severe blow against what little remains of credit, or popular spirit in that assembly. Grey himself is, as may be supposed, much vexed.

LETTER

LETTER LXV.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *June 24th.* 1801.

Dear Sir,

I READILY conjectured the cause of your silence. I knew how much you despond-ed before; and I saw you had greater reason for it than ever, because the infatuation of the public seems more confirmed. In these circumstances, while secession becomes you and your parliamentary friends, private men are called upon for greater exertions, and each of them may well apply to himself that line of Virgil: *Tu, ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.*

From the letter to Major Cartwright, I own I expected no great effect to be produced either on him, or on the societies with whom he possesses influence. I have not yet heard from the worthy Major; nor do I know that my answer has reached him. It were too much to expect either him or them to be converts to more temperate opinions, but we shall have gained somewhat to the public cause, if they are disposed by what has been suggested, to judge more favourably of you, and your moderate principles of reform, than they did before. But what I chiefly had in view, in this little piece, was

to

to satisfy the well-meaning part of the landed interest, who are prevented from joining the friends of liberty by their fears of a forcible revolution, and the wish imputed to us so falsely, to subvert our limited monarchy, and introduce a republican government. And in this respect, from what I hear, I am inclined to hope it will have as much success as could be supposed, from so slight a performance, merely, because it meets the general wish, by the constitutional and pacific sentiments which it announces. But even if this circumstance might tempt me to publish this pamphlet in the usual way, I could not do it: at least Debrett seems to decline it. And friends in Yorkshire, whom I highly respect, have also advised me to forbear, for reasons, of which I own I do not feel the force; though I have promised for the present, to comply with their advice. A second edition however has been struck off, for a more extended private circulation; and the opportunity has been taken to enlarge it a little, by inserting a passage of a few pages, to illustrate what is said of universal suffrage being inapplicable to the present state of manners and property in this country. Some of my friends here thought the explanation wanted, to prevent any sinister construction by our adversaries, and though the insertion could not easily be made without injuring the piece as a composition, I thought it infinitely more material to guard against any misconstruction which might injure the common cause.

I will

I will only add that your complete approbation of what I have done, is to me, in every view personal and public, the greatest gratification I could receive. With sincerest good wishes, and the highest regard,

I am, dear Sir,

Yours ever,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER LXVI.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *Jan.* 14*th*, 1802.

Dear Sir,

YESTERDAY I received from a friend in the North, the pleasing intelligence, that Mr. Grey, finding a mild reform *would not*, or, perhaps to speak more properly, *could not* be conceded by the Minister, had refused the offer of a high office in administration; and broken off the treaty for a coalition. It is impossible he could act more usefully for his country, more honourably for himself, or more worthily as your friend. Doubtless, you as the person principally concerned, would be the first whom he would inform of this honourable conduct; and I hasten to congratulate you upon it; and to express my earnest wish and hope, that it will be steadily persevered in, and followed

by every other friend of yours, and of reform, except the one who has already receded. With every good wish to you,

I remain, dear Sir,

Most truly and faithfully yours,

C. WYVILL.

LETTER LXVII.

From the Hon. C. J. Fox *to the Rev.* C. Wyvill.

Dear Sir,

I DID not till yesterday receive yours of the 14th. With respect to what you have heard, it is true that Mr. Grey, at the request of persons for whom he has the greatest deference, had some conversation with a member of the present administration; but to say the treaty was broken off, is not so correct a description of the transaction, as to say that what passed in that conversation did not afford any ground for any treaty or negociation whatever.

It would on many accounts be improper to enter into particulars, any further than to express my perfect confidence that Grey never will nor ever can, either upon the subject of reform, or any other, act otherwise than is consistent with his own honour and the good of the country.

It

It is said the present ministry promise very fairly upon many points; but I am not much inclined to give them credit.

I am very truly, dear Sir, yours ever,

C. J. FOX.*

St. Anne's Hill,
Wednesday, Jan. 20th, 1802.

LETTER LXVIII.

From the Rev. C. Wyvill *to the Hon.* C. J. Fox.

Burton-Hall, *Jan. 24th,* 1802.

Dear Sir,

I AM much obliged by your letter of the 20th of January; and it gives me the greatest satisfaction to find that Mr. Grey's conduct, in the late conference between him and one of the ministers, is approved by you. Though what passed on the occasion alluded to, has not been correctly understood by me, and remains to be explained by Mr. Grey, at a proper time, to his friends, my reliance is complete, that all will then be found to have been right. And I shall certainly take every opportunity to express my trust and confi-

* The note annexed to the first letter of this series was written before the 21st of December 1805; and it was then true, that the editor had received no letter from Mr. Fox of a date subsequent to the date of this letter; viz. the 20th of January 1802. On the 21st of December 1805, his correspondence with Mr. Fox has been renewed; but it relates to bussiness too recent for publication now. At a convenient time, however, this recent correspondence, with a few letters addressed by the editor to Mr. Fox in 1804, probably may be published hereafter. *London, January 20th,* 1806.

 dence,

dence, in the persevering zeal and honour of Mr. Grey.*

I am, dear Sir, with the greatest truth,
Yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

LETTER LXIX.

From the Rev. C. WYVILL *to the Hon.* C. J. FOX.

BURTON-HALL, *May 14th*, 1802.

Dear Sir,

I BEG you will accept my thanks for the obliging present of your speech, on the character of the late Duke of Bedford. I have read it with great pleasure, and with perfect approbation. The death of such a man, at such a time as this, was truly a misfortune to the public. It has evidently lessened the probability, which was not great before, that national liberty may be restored without a revolution. And it has deprived us not only of his great influence in favour of liberty, but of the benefits too which the

* They who look to Mr. Fox as the editor does, with gratitude for his past exertions in defence of our national rights, and with a confident hope, that his future exertions will add to their security, will look with similar feelings to his coadjutor in the House of Commons, and will join the editor willingly in praising the powerful abilities, the firmness and energy of character, and the patriotic consistency of Mr. Grey.

community

community would have reaped in other respects, from the virtues of a man so powerful and so benevolent. He seems indeed to have attained a very high degree of excellence. His conduct, in the closing scene of his life, as you have described it, struck me particularly. Nothing could be greater than the union of fortitude, and tender regard for his friends, during those trying moments; it has seldom been equalled. His kind remembrance of you, and the proper manner in which he expressed his high respect, as well as his friendship, according to report, gave me the sincerest satisfaction.

I will only add my fervent wish, that another life, still more valuable than his, may be preserved to the public, that the nation, recovering from the panic into which it has been thrown, and resuming its wonted energy and love of rational liberty, may enable you to give the constitution that substantial repair, of which it so evidently stands in need.

I am, dear Sir, with high regard,
Yours ever,
C. WYVILL.

APPENDIX.

THE

SECESSION

FROM

PARLIAMENT

VINDICATED.

IN the laſt Seſſion of Parliament it was obvious, and in leſs diſtreſſing circumſtances it would have been amuſing to obſerve the eagerneſs of the Miniſters' Partizans, in their attempts to blaſt the characters of their Seceded Opponents. They neither felt the dignity of their conduct, nor comprehended its utility. With ſtrange inconſiſtence they lamented the retirement of Senators, whoſe counſels they conſtantly rejected; and cenſured them for violence of conduct, becauſe they ceaſed to diſpute, where they had found it impoſſible to perſuade. Their petulence reminded us of the youthful zeal of Aſcanius in the Chace;

"Optat—fulvum deſcendere MONTE LEONEM"

With his boaſtful preſumption they wiſhed to renew the Combat of Parliamentary Debate, and challenged to perſonal conflict thoſe abſent Chieftains, whoſe ſuperiority of proweſs they at once dreaded and provoked.

This idle petulance, and theſe ill-founded cavils may be ſafely conſigned, with a ſmile of contempt, to their merited oblivion.— But graver objections have been urged by more plauſible advocates of the Miniſter, and haſtily adopted on inſufficient grounds, as we conceive, by men adverſe to his meaſures, and anxious for the preſervation of popular rights. In their eſtimation, Seceſſion is always a dereliction of Public Duty; it is alike inconſiſtent with the principles of the Conſtitution, and injurious to the welfare of the Community. Our readers probably will not deem it unſeaſonable for a ſhort time to fix their attention on each of theſe topics: and we apprehend it will be neither very difficult, nor wholly uſeleſs to ſhow the futility of theſe cenſures; and to prove Seceſſion from Parliament, at preſent, to be juſtifiable, and even meritorious.

But here it ſhall be readily admitted, that, in ordinary caſes, attendance is the indiſpenſible Duty of Men who have been called, by popular Election, or the appointment of the Crown, to a ſeat in Parliament. By authority derived from the Conſtitution, the Members have been placed in a ſtation of great importance to the Public; and the rule of virtue binds them with a comprehenſive generality, not to abandon their poſt. But upon examination, this, as almoſt every other rule of morality, will be found to admit ſome reaſonable exceptions. Certain it is, at leaſt, that the Law of Parliament attempts not to enforce perpetual attendance. The Members, when duly ſummoned, are bound to obey the call

of

of their Speaker; and they are bound by the orders of their reſpective Houſes to nothing more. Every Member is free either to attend or to be abſent, as his diſcretion directs him, except in this ſingle caſe, that there is a Call of the Houſe. And hitherto the exerciſe of this diſcretionary power has been attended with no viſible detriment to the Community. It is hardly poſſible that it ever ſhould. In the Houſe in which alone that power is likely to be exerted with efficacy, the controul of the Conſtituent Body is ſufficient to prevent any material abuſe. But the poſſible good effects of that diſcretionary power are obvious, and of the utmoſt importance Our Conſtitution is a complicated machine, by which the end propoſed can only be obtained, when the juſt balance is preſerved in the ſcale of Legiſlative Authority. But when this ſyſtem of powers and weights, mutually combined and mutually oppoſed to each other, happens to be deranged, the means to rectify the machine, and reſtore the proper movement of its diſordered parts, have not been unprovided. When dangerous diſputes have ariſen between the Executive Power and the Parliament, the *People* are the *Umpire* to whoſe judgment alone they can be referred, and by whoſe deciſion they can be happily adjuſted. On ſuch emergencies, the Crown may diſſolve the Parliament, in order that the ſenſe of the People upon the diſputed points may be authentically declared by a new choice of Repreſentatives. This has been often done; and it is fit that this Right of Appeal againſt

the majority of Parliament ſhould be poſſeſſed by the Crown. In this manner the miſchiefs of Legiſlative Diſcord may be prevented with eaſe; the pins and bolts which diſturbed the motion of the political machine may be quietly removed, and the neceſſary harmony and co-operation of its various parts may be ſafely reſtored. But the Liberty and Happineſs of the Community may be endangered or deſtroyed by majorities in Parliament corruptly leagued with the Crown, as without this power of Appeal they would have been by majorities factiouſly combined againſt it. In fact, the evils which might reſult from the corrupt league alluded to, are more to be dreaded than the miſchiefs which a factious Oppoſition could produce. They are evils far worſe, and far likelier to happen in any ſtate of the Conſtitution. Were the Repreſentation of the People duly regulated, and the duration of Parliaments ſhortened to their ancient period of a year, a factious Oppoſition, thwarting at once the will of the Crown and the wiſh of the People, would be almoſt an unheard-of prodigy. At the ſtated period, the Parliament in which ſuch a Faction ſhould ſtart up, would be terminated, and with it would be cloſed the exiſtence of ſo ſtrange a Phænomenon. The confuſion would be ſhort, the difficulty would be ſoon got over, and National Happineſs would be reſtored by a new Parliament. In the caſe ſuppoſed, however, it would be wiſe to continue the Royal Appeal, as a Preventive of theſe poſſible evils. But then it would be ſtill more neceſſary that

the

the more fatal evils of the league alluded to, ſhould be guarded againſt, by allowing the Minority their Power of Appeal by *Seceſſion*. For even in the moſt improved ſtate of the Conſtitution, it would be impoſſible wholly and at all times to exclude Corruption and honeſt Infatuation. Circumſtances are conceivable, in which Parliament might prove unfaithful to its truſt; and a majority of its Members, panic ſtruck by popular turbulence, or baſely ſold to the Miniſter, might be willing to ſurrender every valuable Right of the Nation. In ſuch a conjuncture, it is evident, that *Public Ruin* would be almoſt unavoidable. No factious majority oppoſed to the Crown, could reduce the Country to ſo perilous a ſtate. It was foreſeen by the ſagacious Cecil, that England might again be placed in this ſituation of extreme danger, as it had been once before, in the ſtormy reign of Henry the Eighth. Hence the ſolicitude of that honeſt Stateſman, to warn his Countrymen, "*That they could only be ruined by their Parliament.*" Henry was ſtern and reſolute: Enriched by the ſpoils of the Church, and armed by his new Penal Statutes, with a formidable power, he finally obtained a more abſolute command than any of our Monarchs. After many baſe compliances, his Parliament gave to the Royal Proclamations the force of Law. This ſingle vote inveſted that bloody and capricious Tyrant with the unbounded power of Deſpotiſm. In a ſubſequent reign, indeed, this Law was repealed; if ſo, this Statute muſt be termed, and not rather deemed, an

unauthorized Act of Treachery, and a Nullity deſtitute of legal authority. By this repeal, however, the greateſt political evil was for that time happily excluded. But Treachery which was committed then, may be again committed. We have ceaſed indeed to be alarmed by Prerogative. But if the means of Undue Influence are now increaſed, if the manners of the Public are more luxurious and enervate, and its character feebler and proner to corruption in this reign than they were in the rude and ſimple age of Henry the Eighth, we have but to conclude, that a breach of Truſt, as fatal as that, is now as likely to be committed; that Venality may ſell, or infatuation yield, what fear then ſurrendered; and the loſs never may be repaired by the ſubſequent remorſe or reſipiſcence of Parliament. And we ſhall be ſtill more powerfully compelled to adopt this concluſion, if we accord with thoſe who have long contended, that the Repreſentation of the People is in a ſtate ſo depraved, that without a Radical Reform in this reſpect neither the Liberties of the People can be ſafe, nor the permanence of a virtuous Adminiſtration can be ſecured.

In any ſtate of the Conſtitution, therefore, whether pure or depraved, Seceſſion muſt be allowable. It is the appeal of a Minority in Parliament, againſt the obſtinacy, the infatuation, or the treachery of a Majority. And in this caſe, as in that of the Royal Appeal by Diſſolution, the *People* are the *Umpire* to whom the Appeal is made. It is a meaſure

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conſonant with the principles of the Conſtitution; and it may be abſolutely neceſſary, as the only poſſible preventive of Ruin.

But that the exerciſe of this diſcretionary power of Seceſſion may be juſtifiable, there muſt be an emergency of great Public Danger; there muſt be a moral certainty, from the continued obſtinacy of Parliament in adhering to meaſures of a pernicious tendency, that farther Debate will be altogether uſeleſs; that a timely change of counſels is not to be hoped from the unaſſiſted wiſdom of Parliament; and conſequently, that National Deliverance can only be effected by a juſt and conſtitutional interference of the People. Under theſe circumſtances there is an actual neceſſity for their interpoſition; which will, and which alone can juſtify an Appeal to the People by Seceſſion. When the neceſſary means of ſafety have not been ſpontaneouſly, and in time applied by Parliament, what the reaſon and eloquence of the minority have in vain recommended, may be obtained by the deciſive authority of the Public Opinion. On a timely declaration of that opinion may hang the laſt hope of ſalvation; and Seceſſion, with a view to procure it, may thus become a neceſſary Act of Duty.

It is true, that the truſt and confidence of the Nation have uſually been repoſed in Parliament; and it is moſt deſirable that this Aſſembly ſhould always deſerve that confidence and truſt. Parliament is, or it ought to be, the bulwark of our ſafety: it is the citadel of the Conſtitution, erected by common conſent

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for the defence of our Rights, againſt the attacks of foreign or internal Foes. They who are placed in that fortreſs, have, indeed, a ſacred truſt committed to their charge; it behoves them faithfully to fulfil it, and to maintain their poſt to the laſt extremity. But ſhould a majority of the garriſon prove groſsly negligent and falſe to their truſt; ſhould it appear that cowardice or corruption had frightened or ſeduced them from their duty, and they had even formed a reſolution to betray the citadel to the enemy, what would remain to be done by the few brave Men who continued true to their truſt, and to the intereſt of the Community? What, but to retreat from that poſt where their attendance was uſeleſs, where it would even tend to lull thoſe whoſe Soldiers they were, into a pernicious ſecurity; and warning their Fellow-Citizens, in all haſte, to line the remaining works of the Conſtitution, to aſſiſt them in their juſt attempt to reſcue their fortreſs out of the hands of a treacherous garriſon. The Rules of the Conſtitution, and the Laws of Military Diſcipline would alike acquit the Senators and the Warriors, who ſhould leave their poſt to ſave their Country. It would be a meritorious retreat from an untenable poſition, to the ſtation in which they ſtill might hope to make a glorious and ſucceſsful defence.

It ſeems clear, therefore, that in ſuch extraordinary caſes, the Seceſſion of Members from Parliament is perfectly defenſible on the principles of the Conſtitution. It is their laſt regular Appeal to the Nation, againſt the obſtinate

ſtinate folly and raſhneſs, or the infidelity of the major part of their Truſtees. And if the impending danger were evident to the Public; if the neceſſity for a retreat were clear and urgent, undoubtedly the Seceding Members would be received with open arms by their Fellow-Citizens.

Such, in all probability, would be their immediate reception. But if the reverſe ſhould happen,—if their motives ſhould be miſunderſtood, and, for a time, unpopularity ſhould load their miſtaken characters, it is not poſſible in the caſe ſuppoſed that the deluſion could continue. Aſſuredly Juſtice would at laſt be done by their Country, and the band of faithful Patriots would not deſpair of the Commonwealth. They would conſider, that their Seceſſion had become neceſſary at a time peculiarly favourable, perhaps, to the arts of Miniſterial deception. The Nation might be engaged in a War with a formidable adverſary; and the prejudices of ancient rivalry, mixed with terror and diſguſt at the dreadful exceſſes of a Revolution, might have been ſkilfully wrought up to a pitch of furious animoſity. Though the ſpirit of Loyalty in the great Body of the People had never been higher, or more unqueſtionable, yet the ſeditious tendency of ſome malignant publications, the indiſcretion of ſome obſcure Societies, and the violence of ſome Popular Meetings, might have been magnified, with too fatal ſucceſs, to inſpire a general panic. By ſuch arts, the Nation might have been deluded into a tranſient dereliction of the principles of Liberty, and

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for a time might ſeem almoſt willing to preſerve their Property and the Peace of the Country from the imagined plunder and commotion, by the ſacrifice of All that Engliſhmen have been wont moſt to prize, the dignity of their Independence, and the fearleſs ſecurity of their Freedom. But the Patriot Stateſmen, though not purſued in their retreat by the general acclamation of their Countrymen, would be ſupported by the applauſe of the wiſe and good, and the concurring zeal of every conſiſtent Friend of Freedom. Paſt experience would aſſure them, that the accumulating burthens of War, and the near approach of a Military Deſpotiſm, would at length diſſolve theſe deluſions, like miſts before the eyes of the multitude, and bring them back from infatuation and political ſtupefaction to common ſenſe and their original feelings; that the gulph into which they were juſt ready to be precipitated, would be diſcerned before it was too late; that the RUIN, which, at a diſtance, had been in vain pointed out to them, on their near approach to it would be ſeen impending over their heads, and threatening inſtantly to overwhelm them. Undoubtedly, when that moment has arrived, the Nation will ſtart back with horror equal to its aſtoniſhment; and the Patriots, whoſe warning voice had long been diſregarded, will ultimately be hailed with a rapture of gratitude, as the DELIVERERS of their COUNTRY.

Such will be the remote, or more immediate approbation, which will aſſuredly attend the meaſure of Seceſſion, on any emergency

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of great and urgent neceſſity. And if it be certain, when thus circumſtanced, finally to receive the applauſe and ſupport of the Nation, it is a matter comparatively unimportant to inquire whether the conduct of the Seceded Members has met the approbation of their reſpective Conſtituents. It is probable, that their applauding voice would anticipate or confirm that of the Public. But, if from ſome ſtrange miſconception, or ſome peculiar ignobility of mind, the Conſtituents of any one of theſe generous Members could diſapprove and cenſure his Appeal againſt a corrupt and over-bearing majority, doubtleſs, when this diſcordance of ſentiment appeared, he would reſign his truſt. Having thus given them the opportunity of a more congenial choice, he would have fulfilled, in every point, the arduous duty of a Repreſentative. His Conſtituents might deſert and reject, but they could not diſhonour him. Under their injuſtice he might well conſole himſelf with the conſcious ſatisfaction of Virtue, and the general gratitude of his Countrymen: and at the cloſe of his Parliamentary Life, adopting the words faintly uttered by the virtuous Savile at the point of death, he might juſtly exclaim, "*I have finiſhed, and I have finiſhed well.*"

It may, we truſt, be now aſſumed without preſumption, that caſes of neceſſity may poſſibly exiſt, in which Seceſſion would be juſtifiable, and even highly meritorious. But little will have been done for the exculpation of our Retired Stateſmen, by proving the truth of this general propoſition, unleſs it be alſo ſhown, from

from the particular circumſtances in which they ſtood when their Seceſſion took effect, that their ſpecific caſe is a caſe of neceſſity. On the principles of the Conſtitution, and on the practice which has been allowed under it, they had a diſcretionary power to Secede. This, we conceive, will not be denied: whether that diſcretion has been wiſely exerciſed, is the more thorny queſtion which remains for our conſideration.

But here an ermined Sophiſter, viewing us with eye aſkance, and a frowning brow, ſeems to interrupt us. What indecency, he cries, to compare, though by the moſt diſtant alluſion, the beſt of Princes and of Huſbands, to the Tyrant Henry, the murderer of his wives! What injuſtice to argue from one ſolitary fact in the reign of that Monarch, under whom the Parliament was over-awed by Prerogative, and the People were uninſtructed, poor, and miſerable, to aught which can be expected in theſe times, in which the Parliament is free and independent, and the People are enlightened, rich, and happy! Let Seceſſion, in ſome imaginary caſe, be allowed to be innocent; but let ſpeculators beware how they apply this doctrine to the preſent ſtate of the Country: Let them reſpect the ſtricter regulations by which our Penal Statutes have been fortified; and learn to curb the impetuoſity of an untamed imagination, or check the indiſcretion of political zeal.

It is not our intention to incur the blame of contemning the laws of our Country. It is not our wiſh either to flatter or defame the mild

mild Prince upon the Throne. We truſt that we honour him as we ought; nor more, nor leſs than duty requires. If the example of private virtue in the Sovereign were alone ſufficient to ſecure to a great Nation the poſſeſſion of thoſe Rights on which its ſafety and happineſs depend, we add, with pleaſure, that Britain ought now to be contented. To the Conſtitution, on its genuine principles, we are faithfully attached; and it is our ſincere prayer to Providence that, on thoſe principles, the Britiſh Empire may ever be governed by the Family on the Throne. Were the new Penal Statutes, with their improvements, copied from the Code of Scotland, more ſevere and captious than they are, though we could not revere, we would obey them; and, by confining ourſelves within the narrower limits then preſcribed, endeavour to ſhun the traps of Informers, and the ſnares of legal Chicaners. We would willingly walk round our native fields in ſafety, and do our duty to the Public in theſe perilous times, without expoſing ourſelves to unneceſſary ſufferings, the victims of a raſh and enthuſiaſtic zeal. The public good which it is poſſible for private men to do, may thus, and thus only be effected; whether their efforts tend to check the headlong career of Miniſters, or to arouze the People from their abject ſtupefaction to a juſt and rational concern for their endangered Freedom. But when a Military Deſpotiſm threatens the Nation with an utter extinction of its Rights, caution muſt not degenerate into timidity, nor moderation cool to apathy and torpid

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inaction. The hand which trembles as it writes, will never uphold the ſinking Liberties of the Nation. We mean not to excite hatred or contempt either of our aged Monarch, or of the Conſtitution, impaired as it is by time, and verging to decay. If ſuch a Monſter as Jefferies now ſat upon the Bench, even his cruel acuteneſs would not diſmay us, while Juries remained the Protectors of Innocence. Relying on their impartiality, we proceed with the firmneſs of conſcious integrity to the more invidious part of our taſk, viz. to conſider, whether exiſting circumſtances actually form a caſe of neceſſity in which it has been proved that Seceſſion from Parliament is juſtifiable.

At a Public Meeting of a great County, a Patriot Member * was embarraſſed by a queſtion of ſimilar difficulty, but not then of equal danger. One of his Conſtituents bluntly aſked him, whether Parliament was not corrupted by the Miniſter. The cautious, but honeſt reply of the Repreſentative was worthy of his character. "If Weſtminſter-Hall proof of Parliamentary corruption be wanted, it is not to be had; but no one but a mere Parſon Adams doubts the fact." The opinion thus intimated was confirmed, in a ſhort time, by the vote of Parliament itſelf, that the influence of the Crown had increaſed, and ought to be diminiſhed. If the incomparable Patriot alluded to were now living, and the queſtion were repeated to him, could he give a different anſwer? We ſhall not decide this point.

It

* Sir George Saville, in the year 1779.

It is true, that a partial reduction of the influence then complained of, was effected by a ſucceeding Adminiſtration; and though the trunk was left untouched, a few of the ſmaller branches were lopt from the tree of Corruption. But has not the tree recovered its loſſes? Has not its trunk ſwollen to a ſtill more gigantic ſize? Has not a new growth of branches ſhot forth and ſpread their baneful ſhade farther than ever? Theſe are queſtions which may be aſked, and we anſwer them in the manner of our honoured Patriot, Who can doubt it? Should the Queriſt, dropping his figurative language, preſs the inquiry in plainer terms, whether the means of Political Corruption have not been immenſely augmented under the preſent Adminiſtration? Whether they have not been employed more extenſively, and with a more dangerous and debaſing effect, during the period of the preſent War, than they were in the courſe of our Civil War with America? We would bid the Queriſt go to the Miniſter, and aſk him: let Mr. Pitt deny the fact, or defend it, if he can.

Shall we be charged with a diſpoſition to exaggerate? Will it be objected, that from the acknowledgment of American Independence the ſyſtem of influence received a material curtailment? Let it be obſerved, in reply, that the influence derived from our American Colonies was loſt when Congreſs, outraged by the haughty refuſal of Parliament to liſten to their petition, reſolved to revolt. After that honeſt declaration by Parliament, and ſubſe-

quently to the peace with America, our increaſed eſtabliſhments at Home, in Canada, Nova Scotia, &c. and above all, the command of the Eaſt Indian patronage, acquired by the preſent Miniſter, have compenſated for petty reforms, and added to the fund of influence an almoſt incalculable ſurplus.

But the Miniſter ſhall not be loaded by us with the imputation of guilt not his own. The fund of Corruption has not been enlarged to its preſent enormous ſize by craft and contrivance in this reign only. It is the reſult of time and accident, combined with Miniſterial fraud, and that paſſion for power which is the inſtinctive propenſity of every Government. Through a long ſeries of years, there has been a concurrence of many official men in meaſures tending to produce this effect; and the ultimate conſequence of theſe meaſures, ſometimes forced upon Miniſters by the folly of the Nation, ſometimes adopted by them as the mere expedients of the moment, has often been neither foreſeen nor intended. For more than a century this Country has been engaged with zeal in the purſuit of power, by the acquiſition of territory and commercial ſuperiority. For this purpoſe, ſettlements have been eſtabliſhed, or acquired by conqueſt, in every quarter of the globe: ſome of them military poſts for our army; ſome of them convenient ſtations for our fleets; the reſt Plantations in Iſlands, rich in the various productions moſt ſaleable in the markets of Europe; or Continental Colonies, by our foſtering care, gradually reared up to populous Provinces; while the mercantile Directors

rectors of a few factories on the coaſt of India, by a ſudden Revolution, have been transformed into the Sultans of extenſive Kingdoms, ſubordinate only to the Monarch of Britain. Hence the wars with which we have been ſo frequently harraſſed, with ſhort intermiſſions of peace! Hence the mighty growth of our army, our navy, and our multitudinous eſtabliſhments at home, and in our provinces abroad! Hence the enormous and ſtill increaſing burthen of our taxes, and the overwhelming accumulation of the patronage of the Crown! Dazzled by the ſplendour of our naval exploits, flattered by conqueſt and political aggrandizement, the Nation never ſeemed to reflect, that too much proſperity might be our ruin; that the ſucceſsful purſuit of this ſyſtem of conqueſt might finally overturn the balance of the Conſtitution.

It is the acknowledged office of Parliament to controul the Executive Government, and in different ages it has performed that duty with varied ſucceſs. In the earlieſt period of the Conſtitution, the Crown poſſeſſing with its legal powers an immenſe landed eſtate, was often enabled by the weight of its property to aſſume an arbitrary authority, under the pretence of an undefined Prerogative. Our Repreſentatives were then, indeed, well connected with the Body of the Nation; Bribery was a practice unknown to the Electors; and the corruption of Parliament itſelf was unheard-of and unſuſpected. But over-awed by the Crown and its allies, the great Feudal Barons, the Commons feebly protected the Rights of their Conſtitu-

ents. The balance of the Conſtitution was unequally hung, the Crown was too powerful, and the Nation was frequently oppreſſed.

In the middle age of the Conſtitution, the power which the Crown derived from its vaſt demeſnes was much diminiſhed; partly by improvident waſte; partly by donations for the purpoſe of obtaining influence and command. During that period, the People, by their induſtry, acquired much of that landed opulence which the Crown had ſquandered, and their Repreſentatives, ſtill faithful to their truſt, were now better able to ſupport the freedom of the Community. In the times alluded to, a long ſyſtematic ſtruggle took place, ſometimes in the Senate, ſometimes unhappily in the Field, with undeciſive ſucceſs. A ſucceſſion of venerable Patriots then aroſe; and from the days of Peter Wentworth and Elliot, of Pym, Hampden, Holles, and Selden, to thoſe of Sidney and Ruſſel, of Cavendiſh and Somers, their object was the ſame, viz. to eſtabliſh on ſolid foundations the conſtitutional controul of Parliament, and the REIGN of LAW by the adminiſtration of a LIMITED KING.

The laſt, and in ſome reſpects the happieſt age of the Conſtitution, commenced at the Revolution, when that glorious object ſeemed to be attained, and the balance of the Conſtitution to be happily adjuſted. But the price paid for the benefits purchaſed by that event was great indeed: a long war with France in the reign of William, another in that of Anne, and, by the acceſſion of the Family of Brunſwick, a perpetual entanglement in the affairs of the Continent,

Continent, and an augmented riſque of being involved in the bloody and expenſive Wars of the Continental Powers. At the cloſe of the ſecond of theſe Wars, the Nation had acquired much foreign territory, and with thoſe long and ſucceſsful hoſtilities had contracted a paſſion for conqueſt, and the unlimited command of commercial advantage. From the period of the Revolution-Wars, we alſo may date the commencement of the funding ſyſtem, with its concomitant train of evils. For, undoubtedly, from the greater facility of borrowing has, in part, ariſen the greater frequency of Wars; and thence have followed an increaſing military force by ſea and land, and a continual augmentation of debts, taxes, and patronage of every ſpecies. The conſequences of this augmentation were long unheeded, and its progreſs ſtill gratified the vanity, without alarming the prudence of the Nation. At length, in the ſpace of one century, it has grown into a ſyſtem of enormous extent and unſpeakable danger. To the wiſeſt Stateſman, the pureſt Patriot, and the moſt ſincere Advocate of our mixed Monarchy in the laſt generation, the growth of undue influence then was very alarming. To evince this aſſertion, the names of Chatham, Savile, and Blackſtone need only to be mentioned. Since their days, the danger has ſtill been increaſing, the ſyſtem of influence has ſtill been extending itſelf by new Wars, and a freſh acquiſition of diſtant territory. Each new conqueſt has of courſe flattered the Victor Nation with another map of its demeſnes, and an additional liſt of military and

civil officers. But influence derived from the gift of offices whence income is obtained, is ſimilar, and may become perfectly equivalent to the influence which our ancient Monarchs, our Edwards, and our Henrys, derived from the donation of their lands.

And on a juſt eſtimate, it would probably be found even now, that the preſent Monarch poſſeſſes as great and extenſive command, by the means of this ſpecies of influence, as the proudeſt of his Predeceſſors drew from his immenſe domain. Be this as it may, it is ſurely time to conſider how this dangerous and increaſing power may be ſtopt in its progreſs, and reduced within that limit of ſafety which it has ſo far ſurpaſſed. Among other means for effecting this neceſſary purpoſe, Peace is at once the moſt deſirable and the moſt efficacious. It is time to finiſh this calamitous War, not ſolely for the intereſts of humanity and religion, ſo groſsly outraged by the pretence that for their defence it was undertaken, but alſo for the ſake of our domeſtic happineſs, and the ſafety of the Conſtitution, now ſo evidently endangered by its continuance. The War, commenced on theſe hypocritical pretences, no longer can be denied to be a ſtruggle for political power, and the farther extenſion of our Empire. To men of the plaineſt underſtanding the conſequence which may be juſtly apprehended is but too manifeſt; the balance of the Conſtitution may be irrecoverably deſtroy'd by the ſucceſs of our inconſiderate and unprincipled ambition. Parliament, conſtantly expoſed to the exorbitant influence which may

thus

thus continue to be amaſſed, may ſink, we know not how ſoon, into a mere office to regiſter the edicts of the Miniſter, and our Repreſentatives may then be ſeen crouching at the foot of the Throne, and like the Senators of Imperial Rome idolizing, in proſtrate ſervility, THE EMPEROR OF BRITAIN.

The fate of the ambitious Romans ought to have been a warning to this too-aſpiring Nation. During a long ſeries of Wars, the legions of the Republic had ſubdued and triumphed over every foe, and Rome became the miſtreſs of the world. But that moment when univerſal dominion was attained, was fatal to the liberty of the Romans. Their Conſuls and Proconſuls had conquered, not for their Country, but for themſelves; and Rome triumphant and enſlaved by the Cæſars, too late lamented that the paths of conqueſt and glory lead only to the grave of liberty and the public happineſs.

Such may be our fate in the laſt and declining age of the Conſtitution; even ſo may Britain, undone by her victories, mourn in hopeleſs regret the complete extinction of her rights. Enervated by her luxury, debaſed by a long courſe of profligacy and corruption, ſhe may be compelled to ſubmit to that iron yoke of Deſpotiſm, for which her vices ſeem to have prepared her, though ſhe knows not how to endure it. May a timely change of ſyſtem prevent this worſt of miſeries! May nations, as well as individuals, be taught by experience to eſtimate their intereſt aright: may they become juſt and temperate in their deſires: may

pomp and ſplendour ceaſe to faſcinate their minds, and bloated grandeur, embarraſſed with debts and ſurrounded with cares and vexations, with many dangers known and unknown, no longer be preferred to the ſolid felicity of a ſafe, affluent, and honourable Independence.

But having admitted in extenuation of his fault, that many of his Predeceſſors ſhare with the preſent Miniſter the blame of having contributed to rear the fabric of Influence to its preſent ſtupendous height; we ſhall not heſitate to aſſert, that in ſome important reſpects he is incomparably more criminal than they. Undoubtedly that Stateſman, whoſe wiſdom it is natural for him moſt to revere, muſt have warned him with earneſtneſs to ſhun the evils of a ſtill farther accumulation of influence in the Crown. To his penetrating eye the danger was plainly viſible, long before the cloſe of life. His own victorious Adminiſtration had increaſed it in a very conſiderable degree; and he lived to feel the pernicious effects of that increaſe. But with a magnanimous zeal for liberty, and an almoſt prophetic preſcience of events, he diſtinctly pointed out to his Countrymen the approaching danger, and preſcribed in timely Reform the means to avert it. By this conduct, the moſt ſucceſsful Miniſter of Great-Britain was dignified by the more valuable and laſting praiſe of Philoſophic Patriotiſm. Thus enlightened by the precepts of an illuſtrious Father, the Son ſucceeded to a ſeat in the Cabinet, ſoon after the expulſion of North; when even the ſordid Parliament of that Miniſter had recently declared, that the

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immenſe accumulation of patronage muſt be diminiſhed. From the younger Pitt no farther augmentation of the Fund of Corruption was dreaded by the Nation. And ſhortly after that riſe, on his exaltation to Miniſterial ſupremacy, he was received by the friends of freedom with acclamations of joy. They then fondly preſaged, that an effectual barrier to Liberty againſt the inroads of Deſpotiſm would be the work of his Adminiſtration. And in the early part of it, when the bloom of youth and virtue was freſh upon him, he gave his Countrymen the promiſe of noble deeds, which ſeemed to juſtify their partial attachment. But, blaſted by the poiſonous effects of power, the bloom quickly withered and decayed; and every generous purpoſe, impreſſed by parental authority, and avowed by the zeal of his own approving heart, gave way to the luſt of ſelfiſh ambition. Inſtead of the Protector of their Rights, the People have found him their determined Enemy. Inſtead of renovating what was infirm in the Conſtitution, he has impaired what he found ſound and vigorous. Under his direction, the fund of influence has received a rapid extenſion; the debt and taxes of the Public, its eſtabliſhments, civil and military, have been increaſed in a prodigious degree, and theſe dreaded inſtruments of Deſpotiſm are wielded by the Miniſter with a ſkill and ability which double their force. Dexterous and bold, he ſeizes every advantage; and makes every event, in ſome mode, available to his purpoſe. Nothing is ſo minute as to eſcape the vigilance of his eye; nothing is

ſo vaſt, ſo difficult, or perilous, as to intimidate the daring intrepidity of his mind. Artful and ſucceſsful in the greater operations of Coalition with powerful men, in the ſmaller appointments of office he is equally attentive and exact. In the diſtribution of honours, titles, ribbands, garters, though more profuſe than the moſt unſcrupulous of his predeceſſors, he ſucceeds in ſupporting the value of theſe baubles; and the coinage of this inexhauſtible mint, however copiouſly emitted, is ſtill coveted, ſtill undepreciated. How dangerous are his talents! How fatal is his Adminiſtration! How is he changed! How is he fallen! The friend of the young and uncorrupted Stateſman will ever regret the ruin of a character which once ſeemed likely to rank with the brighteſt in Britiſh ſtory; and will pity the powerful mind, expoſed by too early ſucceſs, to be fixed by the faſcinating glare of POWER, and entangled irrecoverably in its ſerpent folds. But the Moraliſt and the Friend of Liberty muſt do more; he muſt add to his regret and pity, cenſure and condemnation. He muſt abandon the Miniſter who has abandoned the virtuous principles of his youth; and reſiſt, with reſolution, the enemy of popular Rights, whoſe pernicious meaſures are now calculated to ruin that glorious cauſe which he before had ſworn to defend.

We have ſeen in the preceding pages by what giant ſteps Deſpotiſm has advanced upon us in the ſhort period of a century; we have ſeen the maſs of influence which has been accumulated ſince the Revolution, by our immoderate

moderate purſuit of conqueſt, territorial aggrandizement and the monopoly of commerce. And we have ventured to aſſert, that the weight thus raſhly thrown into the ſcale of Monarchy has given the Crown that degree of preponderance now, which was hardly attained by the proudeſt Plantagenet, in the early period of the Conſtitution. It would not be difficult to ſhow, that miſeries, not perhaps exactly ſimilar in their form, but equal in extent and diſtreſs to thoſe produced in any equal portion of that period, have been in the laſt ſix years the conſequence of this preponderance. We ſhall not, however, attempt to enumerate the myriads of lives loſt in battle, or worn out by hardſhip, fatigue, and privations of every comfort far from home. We ſhall not endeavour to ſketch a portrait of our domeſtic afflictions; or deſcribe the beggary in the lower orders of the People, the general impoveriſhment of the middle claſſes, and the diſtreſs of many, even of thoſe who rank among the affluent. The conſequence of theſe calamities, combined with the decline of perhaps the greateſt part of our manufactures, has been a melancholy depopulation, evidenced by the unexampled number of empty houſes in London, Mancheſter, Birmingham, and other lately flouriſhing Towns. But let it be ſuppoſed, that the meaſures now purſued by Miniſters for the extenſion of our Territory, and farther increaſe of Patronage, have hitherto produced no effects diſtreſſing or oppreſſive to the Nation: Muſt not diſtreſs and oppreſſion be the inevitable conſequence of a blind perſeverance in this ſyſtem? Muſt not

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the ruin of our Political Liberty be followed neceſſarily by the deſtruction of our Civil Rights, and the general Miſery of the Community? It cannot be doubted that ſo it muſt be. All hiſtory, all experience atteſts this concluſion.

But inſtead of inſiſting farther on theſe conſiderations, we ſhall leave them to the Reader's reflections. We have ſuggeſted them merely with a view to lead him on with us more readily to the inference we mean to draw; and though the ingenuity of our opponents may cavil, and endeavour to invalidate the accuracy of our general ſtatement in ſome inconſiderable particle, yet enough will remain clear and inconteſtible to warrant the inference; namely, that it behoves us to examine what is the ſtate of Parliament at preſent; and what counteracting power remains in that Aſſembly to reſiſt this mighty accumulation of influence, and protect with efficacy the Rights of the Nation.

And here we fear it will be found, that the balance which appeared to be wiſely and permanently ſettled at the Revolution, has been deranged, not only by the increaſe of weight in the Monarchal ſcale, but alſo by a diminution of weight in that ſcale of the Legiſlature, in which, by the principles of the Conſtitution, a juſt counterpoiſe ought to be fixed.

Of the Houſe of Lords, on this occaſion, it is unneceſſary, and it might be imprudent, that much ſhould be ſaid. But this may be obſerved, perhaps, without offence, that in theory the weight of that Houſe, though uſually moſt apt to be attracted by the Crown, is yet meant

to

to ſhift; oſcillating from this ſcale to that; joining now the Monarch, now the Popular Aſſembly, as the intereſt of the Public may appear to require for the ſeaſonable controul either of Royal Oppreſſion, or Democratic Licence. But for a conſiderable length of time, the fact has not been conformable with this theory. In every reign ſince the death of Anne, the Peers have been inſeparably united with the Crown. During this period, when the controuling Power of Parliament has been interpoſed, the interpoſition has not been the uncourtly act of the Peers. It is true, their weight has been, and it may again be thrown into the ſcale of Oppoſition. This is, indeed, poſſible; but a bare and meagre poſſibility cannot reſiſt the force of ſubſtantial facts, and the experience of an age. There is little probability of our being deceived by the concluſion, that the courtly complaiſance of our Hereditary Senate, for upwards of eighty years, will be continued by that Aſſembly, until it is freed by Reform from that undue influence by which its oſcillating power is clogged and ſtopt. There are among the Peers, not a few of thoſe who ſtand foremoſt in rank and opulence, in wiſdom, experience, and parliamentary talents, who lament with us this fatal effect. We look up to thoſe truly noble Patriots with gratitude for their paſt ſervices to our Country, with reverent expectation of greater ſervices to come. When, with their aſſiſtance, and the conſent of the Crown, a juſt and temperate Reform ſhall have been effected by the Commons, diſcontent on the one hand, and ſuſpicion on the other,

other, it may be hoped, will be totally removed. The advantage of an enlightened Peerage balancing the ſcales of Power with a firm and impartial hand, between the Prince and the People, and ſupporting Liberty and Public Virtue againſt the extremes on either ſide, by which they might be deſtroyed, will be univerſally felt and acknowledged. And, then, undoubtedly, the Conſtitution in all its branches will ſecure the affectionate attachment of every virtuous Citizen; and the veneration now peculiarly poſſeſſed by the Noble Lords alluded to, will be juſtly paid to that Aſſembly, of which their wiſe and patriotic conduct renders them at once the ornament and reproach.

In the mean time, it is more than probable, that, without the intervention of ſome extrinſic cauſe, the diſpoſition of the Houſe of Lords will remain more generally partial to the Crown, and adverſe to the popular wiſh, than at any former period of its inſtitution. And, as a Houſe of Parliament, whatever increaſe of importance it may have acquired from the Delegation of Scotch Peers added by the Union with Scotland, or the immenſe creation of Peers in the preſent Adminiſtration, that increaſed importance will all be centered in the Crown, and form with it one perfectly conſolidated maſs of Power.

Hopeleſs of aſſiſtance from the Upper Houſe of Parliament, let us turn to ſurvey the ſtate of that Houſe which more peculiarly belongs to the People. It is obſerved by a witty Author, ſpeaking of the Engliſh Gentry in modern

dern times, that nothing could equal their anxiety to get into Parliament, but the anxiety of their forefathers to keep out. There is truth in this obſervation; and it is truth of ſerious importance. Before the reign of Charles the Firſt, the Engliſh Gentry often declined the tendered office of a Repreſentative. The duty to be performed was troubleſome; and the reward to be received was inadequate. About that time, the trifling wages paid by the Conſtituents gradually ceaſed to be taken; and the Court began occaſionally to adopt the policy of gaining the moſt diſtinguiſhed Members by Offices and Honours. This policy frequently proved ſucceſsful. It was more and more extenſively practiced, till, in the reign of William, the entry into Parliament was ſought as the firſt ſtep to honourable ambition, or coveted, as opening the road to lucrative advantage. Hence the new anxiety to obtain a command in Elections, by the purchaſe of houſes in the poorer Boroughs, with their contiguous lands and tithes; by accumulating navigation ſhares, engroſſing coal mines, and other means of affecting the trade and convenience of the inhabitants, and thus reducing them to a ſtate of dependence. Even in one inſtance, the purchaſe of a ſpring of freſh water, materially convenient to the Burghers of a large town, has been eagerly ſought and completed, as no contemptible addition to power already great and predominant. With a ſimilar deſign, an aſcendant in Corporations has been ſought. In ſome caſes, a majority of the Corporate Body has been procured

cured to be choſen from among the relations and dependents of a powerful family. The majority once obtained is eaſily increaſed, as vacancies in the Corporation occur. And thus the command of Parliamentary Elections is perpetually ſecured in the hands of the Patron.

Of theſe petty manœuvres the ſurvey has been ſufficient. But deſpicable as they are, their ſucceſs has not been inconſiderable; in the courſe of the laſt century it has produced a dangerous change in the Conſtitution of the Houſe of Commons.

We are aware that, at the Revolution, ſeveral of the Boroughs were mean and inſignificant places, utterly unfit to retain the truſt of their Parliamentary franchiſe, from their abſolute incompetence to exerciſe it aright. Yet then, Parliament, though not ſo well compoſed as it had been in the early ages of the Conſtitution, was ſtill tolerably well connected with the Body of the Nation; and its conduct had been uſually correſpondent with the ſenſe and intereſt of the Community. The defects in the Repreſentation, undoubtedly, were then perceived by the more ſagacious Friends of Liberty. But in the infant ſtate of Corruption, the practical miſchiefs reſulting from thoſe abuſes were not great, and no urgent neceſſity to correct them appeared to exiſt. It was wiſely reſolved, therefore, by the Conductors of the Revolution, to cloſe, as faſt as poſſible, the revolutionary ſcene. No ſpeculative improvements were propoſed; practical redreſs of the grievances under which they had

actually

actually ſuffered, was alone inſiſted on, and obtained. Hence the ſingular felicity of a Revolution in favour of Liberty, which, if not entirely bloodleſs, was yet effected with fewer ſtains of blood than perhaps any ſimilar event. By it, what was practically wrong was rectified; much immediate good was accompliſhed with little or no mixture of evil; and a precedent was held forth to poſterity, to be followed when a ſimilar neceſſity ſhould demand it.

But after that event, the ſtruggle with Corruption became more and more arduous from the rapidity of its growth; and yet, from the effect of the miſerable manœuvres alluded to, the ſtrength of its Antagoniſt was in a ſtate of continual decline. By thoſe means, the command of votes in a multitude of Boroughs has been gradually engroſſed by one powerful Patron. In many other inſtances, an influence has been obtained by two or three families, by whoſe union the Right of Free Election has been equally annihilated. In England *, it is probable, that not leſs than fifty Boroughs have been thus enſlaved in the laſt age. Conſequently, not leſs than one hundred Members appointed by the nomination of one or two individuals have been added to that number, who, before the Revolution, held their ſeats by a ſimilar appointment. And it appears, from the unqueſtionable authority of

* In Yorkſhire this command has been obtained in the laſt age in the Boroughs of Malton, Richmond, Northallerton, Boroughbridge, and Knareſbrough. Ripon has probably been enſlaved within the ſame period. But this is not aſſerted.——One 17th part of the Repreſentation of England is ſhared by Yorkſhire.

the Petition preſented ſome years ago to Parliament by a moſt reſpectable Body of Men †, that 162 perſons do now appoint a deciſive majority of the Engliſh Repreſentation.

It is alſo to be lamented, that the Union with Scotland, which in other reſpects has been moſt beneficial to each of the United Nations, has, in this regard, produced a moſt pernicious effect. From an accurate enumeration of all the Voters in Scotland *, their number in 1790 appeared not to exceed 4000. Of theſe, many are fictitious or fraudulent Voters, or the Members of a ſmall and ſelf-elected Corporation, by whom in all the towns of Scotland, the Right of Election has been uſurped. In theſe places, not a ſingle Election has been left open to the People, and in the preſent criſis ‡ the preponderance of the Oligarchy is thus increaſed in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons by the whole Repreſentation of Scotland. So crippled is the Conſtitution of Parliament, in this moſt important reſpect! So little community of Intereſt now ſubſiſts between the People and their aſſumed Repreſentatives!

With regard to the duration of Parliament, the change which was effected in the laſt age was not favourable to the Freedom of the

† The Friends of the People, who offered proof to Parliament of the facts alleged in their Petition.

* See a Report by the Friends of the People on the State of the Repreſentation of Scotland.

‡ It has been obſerved, that for ſome years every Repreſentative of the Towns, Cities, and Counties of Scotland, has habitually ſupported the meaſures of the Miniſter in Parliament. Yet many of the other Scotch Gentlemen are firm and enlightened Friends to Liberty.

People,

People, or the purity of their Repreſentatives. Soon after the Revolution, a Triennial duration was eſtabliſhed, as the moſt convenient period. In the Reign of George the Firſt, on frivolous pretexts, and in a moſt unwarrantable mode, it was lengthened to a Septennial duration. The change has evidently tended to facilitate the ſeduction of the Elective Senate, and detach it more completely from the intereſt of its Conſtituents. The ſhameful Corruption, now become ſo generally prevalent at Elections, has alſo a ſimilar tendency. Thus has the fortreſs of our ſecurity been undermined in the laſt age by the ſubtle machinations of Fraud and Power! Thus has the ſanctuary of our Laws been thrown open, and profaned by the vileſt pollution!

In this degraded ſtate of the Conſtitution, weakened as it is by internal decay, and expoſed externally to the formidable influence of the Crown, the Senators who have Seceded performed their duty with zeal. By them the danger of the criſis was clearly ſeen. They felt, that every poſſible effort ought to be exerted, 1. to augment the counteracting power of Parliament by Reform: 2. to prevent the calamities of War, and thus ſtop the increaſe of undue Influence: 3. to ſupport the dignity of the Houſe of Commons: 4. to protect the perſonal freedom of the ſubject: and 5. to maintain the fundamental Law of the Land. Theſe were the objects of the Seceders moſt earneſt endeavours. And, in the courſe of their exertions for attaining theſe ends, they em-

ployed talents, and manifeſted reſolution, vigour, and perſeverance, which Parliament had never ſeen ſurpaſſed, but totally without ſucceſs.

To invigorate the powers of Parliament by a temperate Reform, was the firſt meaſure propoſed by this ſmall, but reſpectable band of Patriots. In 1792, notice was given of their intention to move this meaſure by a Member, of whom Northumberland may juſtly boaſt that he is the Savile of this age*. Immediately the Houſe was in confuſion, Corruption was alarmed, and the Miniſter dropt his maſque. From that moment the Reformer-Miniſter adopted a new character and an oppoſite ſyſtem of Adminiſtration. A harſh Proclamation was ſpeedily iſſued. The ſage and virtuous friends of Reformation were branded as Seditious Enthuſiaſts or Revolutionary Traitors; the Nation was declared to be in danger, and a general panic was excited. After a conſiderable interval of time, and much deliberation, the plan for reſtoring the ancient purity and vigour of the Conſtitution was tendered to Parliament; it was a wiſe and comprehenſive plan; it was a plan of prudence and moderation; its principle was the ſame which the Miniſter had before adopted, and its probable effect more extenſively beneficial, and more prompt in the execution. Yet, though thus unexceptionable in all theſe reſpects, though introduced and ſupported by the utmoſt powers of reaſon and eloquence, the Miniſter did not bluſh to oppoſe the mea-

* Charles Grey, Eſq.

ſure

ſure with vehemence, nor the Houſe heſitate to reject it with a deciſive negative.

Baffled in their attempt to purify and invigorate Parliament, was the band of Patriots more ſucceſsful in their endeavours to ſtop the progreſſive increaſe of the fund of Corruption, and prevent hoſtilities againſt the French Republic? No. When the Retainers of the Oligarchy declaimed with fury againſt the Democratic Government of France, the Miniſter, ſtrong in his new alliance with them, joined in their cry for War. The friends of Peace and Liberty urged whatever arguments humanity or policy could ſuggeſt to calm the paſſions of an enraged Senate, and avert the uplifted ſcourge. They deprecated that alternative of Deſpotiſm or Anarchy to which the proſecution of even a proſperous War would unavoidably expoſe us; they deprecated a War of punctilio, pride, or paſſion, and wiſely recommended an aſſiduous cultivation of the arts of Peace, and a ſteady attention to the improvement of our finances, till ſome great intereſt of our Country could only be preſerved by hoſtilities. But they urged, they deprecated, and they adviſed in vain. Punctilio, pride, and paſſion prevailed againſt the plaineſt reaſon, and the wiſhes and intereſt of a few individuals outweighed in the Senate the wiſh and intereſt of the Community. To avenge the execution of the ill-fated Louis, to defend ſocial order, morality, and religion, to reſent the obnoxious but reſcinded decree of Nov. 19, 1792, to reſcue Holland, though not attacked, and even to cloſe the

Navigation of the Scheldt, though not complained of, were among the moſt prominent pretexts for War. But their texture was too flimzy to hide the real motives, viz. the deſire to depreſs the ſpirit of Liberty in England; to ſecure the uſurped Power of the Oligarchy; and to aggrandize the Power of the Crown. The means for attaining theſe ends were to be found in War alone; and in a frenzy of rage it was commenced. Hence the peremptory rejection of every ſubſequent motion for reſtoring Peace, whether defeat or victory attended the Allied Armies. In either caſe, pretences were ſtill at hand to juſtify the Miniſter's refuſal to negotiate; and a willing Houſe admitted them without much examination, and almoſt without deigning to liſten to his Opponents. When Belgium was recovered by the efforts of the Combined Army, and that of France was driven behind their own frontiers, Parliament was urged in vain to ſeize that favourable moment to treat, when every object that could rationally be wiſhed from War, might be obtained by Peace. The propoſal, in the judgment of Miniſters, was moſt ridiculous: France now might be diſmembered; our army might march to Paris; the Republican Government might be over-turned; and the glorious opportunity to cripple France and reſtore her Monarchy was not to be loſt. Rouzed by theſe menaces and this imminent danger, France ſaw that ſhe could be ſaved by Union alone. Diſmiſſing political animoſities, Frenchmen of all deſcriptions took up arms to ſupport the exiſting Government, and repel the invading

invading foe. The efforts of that great armed Nation were irreſiſtible; they drove the combined troops beyond the frontiers, firſt of France, then of Belgium. Yet ſuch was the embarraſſment of the new Government of France, and ſo mighty did the force of the Confederacy ſtill appear, that even then a Peace, nearly reſtoring Europe to its original poſture, might probably have been obtained. Our Patriots wiſely propoſed and preſſed it, but they propoſed and preſſed it without ſucceſs. In the opinion of the Miniſter and the Houſe, the moment of defeat was not the time for negotiation. At length, peace, or a ceſſation of arms, became general throughout the Continent of Europe*.—The queſtion ſo often aſked with an air of triumph, Whom are we to treat with? was now become too ridiculous to be aſked again. Twice the Miniſter negotiated for Peace, and twice he failed to procure it. The firſt of theſe negotiations was merely a fine-ſpun web of diplomatic chicane and inſincerity; the ſecond has, in ſome degree, unravelled the ſecret of the Cabinet, and taught us for what we are doomed ſtill to contend. Perpetual War, or the Ceſſion of Ceylon and the Cape! Is this the alternative? Humanity ſickens at the ſound; and every friend of rational Liberty ſhudders at our approaching fate. But argument and admonition, reaſon and eloquence are loſt upon the Senate. In this fatal ſtruggle they plunge on, regardleſs of our exhauſted

* Portugal was an exception, but almoſt too inconſiderable to be noticed.

finances, and the certain ruin of the Conſtitution.

Defeated in their efforts to prevent or ſhorten the calamities of War, were theſe worthy Senators ſucceſsful in their endeavours to ſupport the dignity of the Houſe, and the Law of the Land? No. When they charged the Miniſter with a breach of his duty to that Houſe, as guardian of the purſe of the Nation, by having paid an immenſe ſubſidy to the Emperor without the conſent or knowledge of Parliament, even during a Seſſion, the charge was heard without emotion by the Houſe; the Miniſter avowed the fact, and his reſolution to act in a ſimilar manner again, when he might judge it proper. His contempt of the Right of the Houſe was over-looked; and his avowal, inſtead of aggravating his fault, in the judgment of the Houſe, was accepted as his juſtification.

When they charged him with a breach of the Appropriation Law, he avowed the fact, and the Houſe acquieſced.

To ſtifle the cries of public miſery and diſcontent, more rigorous Laws were propoſed, affecting the Perſonal Liberty of the Subject, and even abridging the Right of Petition, which had been tranſmitted down to us from the earlieſt times, and aſſerted in the modern Charter of our Liberties. The venerable antiquity of our Right was diſregarded, the ſacredneſs of a compact, by which the Monarch's title to his Crown, and the People's Right to their Freedom was thought to be equally ſecured, was infringed, and the BILL

OF RIGHTS was rudely trampled on by the Son of Chatham. In vain the Friends of the People interpoſed with active and indefatigable zeal, and the cleareſt ſuperiority of argument to protect Perſonal Freedom, and maintain the fundamental LAW OF THE LAND. By the influence of the Miniſter, the fatal Bills were paſſed, and Perſonal Freedom was expoſed to new dangers from legal chicane; the violation of the BILL OF RIGHTS completed the ruin of his character, and every virtuous breaſt throbbed with alarm for Conſtitutional Liberty.

Such were the principal circumſtances in the ſtate and conduct of Parliament and the Nation, which in our opinion formed that caſe of neceſſity in which an Appeal to the Public by Seceding from Parliament was juſtifiable, and even highly meritorious. And here the deciſion of this queſtion may be confidently left to our Readers on this ſtatement of the caſe. But foreſeeing ſome objections, pointed rather againſt the Seceders than their Seceſſion, which may occur to perſons of different political claſſes, we defer the concluſion of our paper for a few moments, to ſtate the objections, and offer to each a brief, and, we truſt, a ſatisfactory reply.

1. There are among the eager opponents of Miniſters, many who admit, that no uſeful impreſſion on the mind of Parliament was to be expected from any efforts of eloquence, however powerful. The audience, whoſe ears are ſtopt like the deaf adder, cannot be moved by the Orator's perſuaſion, charm he never

ſo wiſely. Yet why ſhould the Senator deſpair to rouze and animate the People, by the vigour of thoſe exertions in Parliament to which that Aſſembly might refuſe to attend? Why ſuffer the Public to remain ſo long ſupine and inactive, and leave their zeal to be at laſt worked up to active oppoſition by the ſlow, though certain effect of Time? Becauſe, if the energy of eloquence ſhould ſtimulate their diſcontent, the pretext for freſh invaſions of Liberty would be afforded; and thus a Revolution would be effected, or would become unavoidable. Seceſſion ſhuns that danger with a caution ſuited to the times. It is a continued Proteſt againſt the meaſures of Miniſters, yet without popular ſtimulation. It is exactly that ſort of Appeal which warns the upper claſſes, without inflaming the lower. And when the illuſions of panic in the higher orders have been more completely removed by the patience of the inferior claſſes, under great and oppreſſive burthens, the Rich will ſee with horror that debaſing RUIN which their infatuation has ſuffered ſo nearly to approach. They will fly for ſafety to the remaining fences of the Conſtitution; and their confidence will then be repoſed, where it is juſtly due, in thoſe Seceded Stateſmen, whoſe counter-revolutionary meaſures they at preſent ſo groſsly miſunderſtand.

2. But here the Advocates of Miniſters, anxious to bring forward the diſcuſſion of an injurious perſonality, will, perhaps, admit that the Seceſſion may be, what it is here repreſented, a meaſure tending rather to prevent than

than to promote a Revolution. "Let this be conceded for a moment, they will exclaim; and let us turn to the conſideration of another point of leſs difficult determination, and too important to be overlooked. We aſſert, and the arguments of this paper appear to confirm the aſſertion, that the Seceders are no friends to the grandeur and glory of their Country." Our reply is, that they are the trueſt friends to the grandeur and ultimate ſafety of Britain, not who endeavour to depreſs and extinguiſh, but who cheriſh and protect that ſpirit of Liberty, without which ſhe never could have attained her preſent pre-eminence: not they who purſue, by hoſtilities, the farther acquiſition of diſtant ſettlements, madly defying National Bankruptcy and Confuſion, but they who warn their Countrymen to forbear that extenſion of their territory which ſoon may, and ultimately muſt, prove the ruin of their Liberty; and to ſeek the ulterior wealth, proſperity, and ſplendour of the BRITISH EMPIRE in the peaceful extenſion of our Trade; in the improved cultivation of our Domain; in the diminution of our load of Debts and Taxes; in the milder and more equitable ſpirit of our Laws; and in thoſe meaſures of Conſtitutional Reform which would reſtore morals and public ſpirit to the PEOPLE, and its ancient virtue and vigour to the PARLIAMENT of Great-Britain. Such are the objects contended for by the Seceders; and on the fate of their endeavours, the Peace, the Grandeur, and the Happineſs of our Country depend.

Since

Since the rupture of the Negotiation at Liſle, we have ſtruggled with the enemy through one bloody defenſive campaign; and we have ſtruggled with ſucceſs. The Rebellion fomented by France, in Ireland, has been ſuppreſſed; her troops landed in that unhappy Country have been captured; her armaments from Breſt and Dunkirk have been defeated or diſperſed; and her Toulon Fleet has been deſtroyed. Enough has been done to manifeſt the great defenſive power of Britain, and her reſolution not for a moment to liſten to any ignominious condition of Peace, or ſuffer the dignity of her INDEPENDENCE to be in the ſmalleſt degree impaired. Nothing humiliating, nothing degrading can be endured in thought by this high-ſpirited and powerful Nation; and, leaſt of all, by that part of it who are the ſtrenuous Friends of Public Liberty. But farther acquiſitions of territory are neither eſſential to our honour, nor conducive to our ſafety. The dignity of our INDEPENDENCE may be nobly maintained without them. The objects contended for were the poſſeſſions of our late unfortunate Allies. Their total value is not equal to the expence of two months hoſtilities. But were it greater; to cede them to Holland would be an act of policy and true magnanimity. It would give Peace to Britain, and confirm the repoſe of Europe. It would be to act with that moderation which France falſely profeſſed; and to conciliate, by our wiſer and more benevolent conduct, the eſteem of mankind. The opportunity is before us.

We

We may with dignity and honour make the offer to negotiate again. We are ſecured by our victories from the fear of Invaſion; and no unworthy motive can now be imputed to us. The cruel policy of Miniſters would light the flames of War anew throughout Europe; and failing in that project, they would continue hoſtilities ſingly againſt France, in the mad ſtruggle for an uſeleſs and dangerous extenſion of our Empire*. That they will receive a check in this deſperate career, from the wiſdom of our Repreſentatives, is too much to be hoped. It is only from the wiſdom and virtue of the Collective Body, conſtitutionally exerted, that we can juſtly expect deliverance.

3. Repulſed in this attempt to injure our Seceded Statesmen, the partizans of the Miniſter, doubtleſs, will renew their attack in a different direction. They will endeavour to repreſent them "As Men, who, in their eagerneſs for Peace, abandon the balance of Europe; who are willing to hazard nothing to emancipate Holland and Switzerland, or to wreſt Belgium and Weſtern Germany out of the hands of the French. They are no enemies to the aggrandizement of the Republic of France; their zeal for the welfare of their Country is queſtionable, and they are not en-

* To riſque the happineſs of the Empire for a Rock in Africa, and another Harbour in Aſia, may well be termed deſperate policy. The Cape of Good Hope cannot ſupport its Garriſon. It has been ſupplied with neceſſaries from Europe. Yet this barren, or ill-cultivated ſpot has a Governor with a ſalary, as it is ſaid, of 12,000l. a-year. Ceylon alſo has a Governor with a ſuitable ſalary, and a Civil and Military Liſt.—Trinidada too, and ſome other ſmaller Iſlands might here be mentioned.

titled

titled to the confidence of the Public." The emancipation of Switzerland, Weſtern Germany, and the Netherlands! Are theſe the objects for which we muſt engage in a new Continental War? Is this the ſcheme of wiſe and meaſured policy, which every good Citizen muſt approve and adopt? Are then the events of the late War upon the Continent ſo ſoon forgotten? Are the cautious maxims of the Court of Pruſſia ſo little underſtood? Can we ſuppoſe that wary Court willing to abandon France, her only ſtay and ſupport againſt the over-grown power of Ruſſia and Auſtria? Can our ſubſidies tempt that wiſe Cabinet to forego the certain advantage of ſharing in the ſecularizations of Germany without the riſque of hoſtilities, and to enter into the new Cruſade againſt her Ally? For what? That the Stadtholder and the Dutch and Helvetic Ariſtocracies may be re-eſtabliſhed, that the petty Princes of Weſtern Germany may be reſtored to their eſtates, and that Italy may furniſh to Auſtria a freſh addition to her immenſe Domain. Can changes ſo trifling or ſo dangerous to the intereſt of Pruſſia induce her Cabinet to alter their cautious policy? If this be inconceivable, what conſequences but miſcarriage and ruin can reſult from the new-projected Coalition of Kings and Emperors, acting without Pruſſia againſt France? Perhaps againſt France aſſiſted by that Power? Under theſe circumſtances it is manifeſt that the renewal of hoſtilities upon the Continent would be attended with extreme danger to Auſtria. Hence it may be preſumed, that without the concurrence

rence of Pruſſia, War will not be recommenced by the new Confederacy of Monarchs*; and the rage and animoſity of Britain will only ſerve to aggrandize Auſtria, by enabling her to inhance the terms of her pacification with France.

But the greateſt raſhneſs, the utmoſt injuſtice, are always poſſible to human folly. And War is not ſure to be avoided by the two great German Powers, merely becauſe Peace is the evident intereſt of one, perhaps of both. Pruſſia, tempted by the gold of Britain, may renounce her cautious policy, and, adopting the deſperate ſchemes of the Britiſh Cabinet, may enter once more with her old and dreaded Rival into the league againſt France.

* Since this paſſage was written, it has been announced, that the troops of France have been attacked within the limits of the Roman Republic by the army of Naples: In conſequence of this aggreſſion, and the alleged diſcovery of intrigues carried on between the Courts of Naples and Turin, War has been declared againſt both thoſe Powers by the French Directory: the Neapolitan Army has been defeated by that of France; and the formal depoſition of the King of Sardinia has been effected. It is impoſſible not to feel compaſſion for this unhappy Monarch, ſtript of all his Continental Dominions, and fled for refuge to that Iſland, an Exile, rather than a King. But his misfortune ought not to be imputed to the recent cabals and projects of our Cabinet: He was in effect dethroned, when he admitted a French Garriſon into the Citadel of Turin. Whether the raſh and premature movement of the Monarch of Naples will tend to promote or prevent the renewal of a Continental War, whether theſe events will more intimidate or provoke the Emperor, a few weeks will probably ſhow. In the mean time, it behoves the Auſtrian Cabinet to conſider well the energy and enthuſiaſm manifeſted by the French Government; the ſkill and vigour diſplayed by their Armies and Generals on this occaſion; and above all, the ready diſpoſition of the People and Army of Piedmont, to adopt a Democratic Government, and to unite with the French. Theſe are circumſtances which ſeem to confirm the reaſoning above.

Such

Such may be the result of the pending Negotiation at Berlin *. Yet, even in this caſe, we muſt not too haſtily anticipate our triumphs, or expect with confidence the diſmemberment of France. It will be more rational, perhaps, to judge the future by the paſt; and from the total defeat of the firſt Confederacy, to augur a ſimilar miſcarriage of the ſecond.

Invaded by the German Powers, and the Combined Armies of Turkey, Ruſſia, Naples, and Britain, France will be ſupported by Spain, and the Democracies of Holland, Switzerland, and Italy. Again her mighty force will be excited by the approach of imminent danger; and her revolutionary enthuſiaſm will be again wound up to a pitch of fury, from which the Combined Monarchs will have every thing to fear. In number their forces may ſurpaſs, and in valour, diſcipline, and ſkill equal the Armies of France and her Allies. Their mutual fears and jealouſies may, for a time, be abſorbed in one common deſire to humble this proud Republic, and reduce her within the ancient frontier of France. For this purpoſe, on opening the campaign, their efforts may be directed with vigour and unanimity on one comprehenſive and well-concerted plan. On their firſt onſet, at every point of attack, ſucceſs may attend their armies. But ſoon, or a

* The Hon. T. Grenville was the Negotiator ſent; but, unable to enter the frozen rivers and harbours of Germany, he has returned to England, after a fruitleſs and fatiguing voyage. The friends of humanity, and the well-wiſhers of England, ſeem to have little reaſon to lament the diſappointment.

little

little later, this flow of proſperity will be ſtopt, and the tide of War will turn in favour of the Republic. New ſituations will open to the Allies new proſpects of perſonal advantage or danger; the general intereſt of the league will be poſtponed by each of the Allied Powers, to his own ſeparate and individual intereſt; new competitions will ariſe; old jealouſies and animoſities will be revived; the efforts of ſome of the Combined Monarchs will be relaxed; the exertions of others will be diverted by private views to the purſuit of objects little important to the General Cauſe. The preſſure upon France, by this great Confederacy, will be thus conſtantly weakened; while her elaſtic power to reſiſt, and finally repel their compreſſing weight, will be continually increaſed by her ardour, and the zeal of her Democratic dependencies; defeat will call forth greater and more inceſſant exertions in the common cauſe of ſelf-preſervation; ſucceſs will add the incentives of glory, revenge, and conqueſt; and, mixing them with their paſſion for Liberty and National Defence, exalt once more the heroiſm of the Republican Armies to the higheſt pitch. The tactics and the cool mechanical valour of the Monarchal Troops will again be ſurpaſſed by the united ſkill and enthuſiaſm of their Republican Antagoniſts. Checked in the firſt campaign, or routed in the ſecond, the German and Italian Princes will be alarmed once more with the irruption of French Armies. The flood-gates will thus be thrown open afreſh to the revolutionary torrent. The oppreſſed Burghers

and Peaſants of Germany and Italy will be hurried by it into violent commotions; the Petty Deſpots of * Suabia, Franconia, Weſtphalia, and Tuſcany will be ſwept off firſt to ruin; the greater Deſpot of Naples will follow them; and neither Berlin nor Vienna will be ſafe. Such, in all human probability, will be the unhappy conſequences of the firſt two campaigns of this new Continental War, ſo vehemently preſſed by the Britiſh Cabinet. The more fatal conſequences which ultimately may reſult from a farther proſecution of it, are too painful to be here ſurveyed. As Men friendly to the gradual and peaceful improvement of our ſpecies, we deprecate them from the bottom of our hearts, and willingly avert our eyes from the diſtreſſing proſpect.

But ſhould the moſt favourable events occur, which in this War can be ſuppoſed with any appearance of reaſon, what advantage can Britain expect? Let it be imagined, in contradiction to experience, that France will be unable to maintain her poſition, and defend her own frontiers, and thoſe of the new Democratic Republics. Preſſed by the Armies of Pruſſia and England on the ſide of the Netherlands, and by thoſe of Auſtria, Ruſſia, &c. on the Rhine and in Italy, ſhe muſt reſolve,

* The order of events, here ſuppoſed, may probably be reverſed by the raſhneſs of the Neapolitan Monarch. His unexpected march to Rome has been ſucceeded by a more rapid march back to his own territories. Routed and purſued by the Republicans, he feels his Crown tottering on his head, and already turns his eyes to the Engliſh fleet for a ſafe convoy to his Iſland of Sicily. But the argument proceeds with unaltered force.

either

either to abandon her recent acquiſitions in the Netherlands and Weſtern Germany, together with the Dutch and Swiſs Democracies, or give up the Italian Republics in whole, or in part. Reduced to this alternative, and it is the utmoſt which can rationally be hoped, which ſide of it will probably be the choice of the French Directory? Doubtleſs, the preſervation of their frontier on the Rhine, and the maintenance of the Republics of Holland and Switzerland will be the primary object of their policy; and the defence of the Italian Republics will be deemed a conſideration of ſecondary and far inferior importance. At any ſuppoſable point of adverſity, the Directory will hold in their hands the means of deliverance. In any poſſible conjuncture, they will be able to detach the German Powers from the league by ceding Mantua, Milan, Bologna, Genoa, and even Rome to the Emperor's ambition, and agreeing that a ſuitable compenſation to his Brother Monarch of Pruſſia may be annexed to his Dominions in Lower Saxony and Weſtphalia. Under ſuch circumſtances it ſeems a romantic hope, that any efforts of Britain can ever reſtore the Oligarchies of Switzerland, and the Stadtholderate of Holland, or wreſt Belgium and Weſtern Germany out of the hands of France. It is poſſible, that ſhe may be forced to make ſome ſacrifices, and the two great German Powers may acquire the aggrandizement alluded to. But never muſt we look for thoſe ceſſions in the Dutch and Belgic Netherlands,

which alone would form to Britain a conſiderable object of national advantage.

By the treaty of Campo Formio, the extenſion of her frontier to the Rhine was aſcertained to France; and that extenſion has been admitted by the German Empire, as the principle of the ſubſequent Negotiation at Raſtadt. This formidable aggrandizement of our ancient Rival may juſtly be regretted; but when the German Powers themſelves have acceded to it, it were wiſe for Britain alſo to acquieſce. The difficulties which have retarded the Definitive Peace at Raſtadt, have related ſolely, or chiefly, to the propoſed ſecularizations. Reſpecting theſe changes, the intereſts of the Empire may ſafely be truſted with the Princes of Germany, who are now ſettling with France the neceſſary compenſations. However mortifying her interference may be to the Britiſh Cabinet, it cannot be a valid reaſon for a new Continental War *.

The renewal of a General War upon the Continent, on this ground, cannot be too deeply deprecated. It would be an act of more dire temerity than its commencement before; and the worſt of evils, in every direction, may be its fatal conſequence.

The futility of the Miniſter's warlike pro-

* This has been avowed by Lord Grenville as one reaſon for another Continental War. In the debate in the Houſe of Lords on the King's Speech at the opening of this Seſſion, ſee the reply of Lord Grenville to a wiſe and humane Speech by the Marquis of Lanſdowne in favour of Peace. Unfortunately, however, the Nation ſeems as little to underſtand the wiſdom of Lord Lanſdowne's pacific policy, as it appears to feel the generoſity of Mr. Fox's conduct, in ſupporting the principles of Conſtitutional Liberty.

jects,

jects, and the emptineſs of his pompous phraſes, have been already detected. Let not the propoſal of a new War for the DELIVERANCE OF EUROPE delude the good ſenſe of the Engliſh Nation. Without our inauſpicious interference, Europe will be ſafe; and without our fooliſh obſtinacy to retain the conquered ſettlements of Spain and Holland, the hazards of internal Revolution will be removed by a general Peace, and Britain, neither endangered nor diſhonoured, will again enjoy the bleſſings of repoſe, and a mild Government ſecured by a timely, juſt, and temperate Reformation of Parliament.

Upon the whole, then, we aſk, who have proved themſelves the moſt judicious Adverſaries of French aggrandizement? They who foreſaw and predicted, that the Confederacy of Kings againſt the Republic of France would prove an abortive enterprize; who with a wiſe caution adviſed Miniſters to ſhun or ſhorten a conflict that might lead to ruin; who warned them that it would be perilous in the extreme to grapple with France, when the fervor of revolutionary enthuſiaſm gave her in ſome ſort a præternatural power, which might produce incalculable effects; and that from the deſperate frenzy into which they were preparing to goad her, conqueſt and crime might equally reſult; but were her ardour ſuffered to cool by Peace, inſtead of planning conqueſts abroad, the utmoſt exertions of her ſkill would be employed for a ſeries of years in repairing her internal damage

damage from the ſtorm of the Revolution, and ſettling on a ſecure foundation the diſordered intereſts of the Republic; or they who, rejecting theſe ſage admonitions, raſhly plunged into the War, predicting it would be a ſhort one, and its iſſue fortunate for this Country. Who beſt deſerve the confidence of the Public? They who by their ill-planned and ill-conducted hoſtilities upon the Continent have actually aggrandized the French Republic; and yet, with a ſtrange obſtinacy would attempt to retrieve what their impolicy has thrown into the graſp of France, by repeating an experiment already found ſo unfortunate; or they who have always adviſed pacific meaſures, and now, more than ever, recommend them; whoſe plan for ſupporting the grandeur of Britain is deep and comprehenſive; not formed on ſuperficial views, or for the narrow purpoſes of ſelfiſh ambition; but calculated on the ſure grounds of experience to ſecure the laſting proſperity of the Empire; whoſe wiſdom would immediately terminate this diſaſtrous War, if Peace on ſafe and equitable terms were found to be attainable; but if ſuch terms, on a freſh overture, could not be attained, whoſe liberal policy, by reſtoring the true principles of the Conſtitution, and introducing an Adminiſtration at once firm and popular, vigorous and œconomical, would enable this free, and by them, United Nation, now, and in the AGES TO COME, to maintain her INDEPENDENCE with a lofty hand, and ſucceſsfully to reſiſt the

Power

Power of France, however formidably augmented by the raſhneſs and obſtinacy of the preſent Adminiſtration.

4. But aſhamed of their miſrepreſentations, our Opponents reſort to a new cavil. Why, they aſk, do Senators Secede, or private Men complain that Liberty is in danger, when the Miniſter, by conſenting to the re-eſtabliſhment of Juries in their ancient Right, has given an ample additional ſecurity to the People, and proved that his Adminiſtration is not unfriendly to Liberty? To this we anſwer, that if Parliament be once loſt to the Public by its ſervile ſubjection to the Cabinet, no Civil Right will be ſafe for a ſingle Seſſion; every protecting privilege may be voted away with as much facility as the Habeas Corpus Law has been ſuſpended. What the Miniſter has conferred, the Miniſter, at his pleaſure, may reſume. Privileges, precariouſly held by Juries, cannot leſſen the neceſſity to Secede: They may increaſe the efficacy of popular interference; they cannot render Seceſſion, with a view to obtain it, improper or unſeaſonable. In a criſis of great danger, and in a ſtate of Parliament which is utterly hopeleſs without the lawful interpoſition of the People, Seceſſion then, and not till then, becomes an act of duty to the Public.

But here we readily acknowledge the importance of the regulation alluded to. With the reſt of the Miniſter's ſyſtem it appears incompatible. But it is not our buſineſs to explain his inconſiſtencies; neither is it our wiſh

to

to depreciate what he has done well. We willingly commend this conceſſion; and we admit, that, from a long ſeries of acts which indiſputably evince his guilt, one beneficial meaſure, in which he concurred, may be ſelected. For while the Miniſter's ſhare of praiſe for this meaſure is allowed him, it muſt not be forgotten that the reſtoration of the Right of Juries is principally to be aſcribed to two Senators, the foremoſt of his Opponents. The firſt a Man * born to unite accompliſhments and virtues ſeemingly oppoſite; who joins to the ſofteſt philanthropy, the firmneſs and vigour of a philoſophic mind; and, to the wiſdom of an experienced Stateſman, adds the eloquence of a Demoſthenes, and the zeal of a Patriot in the cauſe of Liberty; and linked in friendſhip with him, that intrepid Man †, who firſt combated the prejudices of the Bar and the Bench, before he attempted to conquer thoſe of the Senate; whoſe paſſion for Liberty is the natural glow of a mind at once ardent and benevolent; whoſe eloquence and learning fit him to plead the cauſe of his Country; who treads with firm and rapid ſteps that honourable courſe which Somers trod before him.

5. The laſt objection which we ſhall beg leave to ſtate relates to ourſelves. It may be ſaid, that we ſtand ſelf-contradicted, and our invidious allegation of the peril and tyranny of the times is confuted by the freedom we

* The Honourable C. J. Fox.

† The Honourable T. Erſkine.

have

have not feared to uſe in this diſcuſſion. To this obſervation our anſwer ſhall be brief. What we have written has been the reſult of our conviction that the Country is in danger; and that ſafety can only be found in thoſe meaſures to which the Seceſſion we have thus freely vindicated is a continual exhortation. In ſtating our ſentiments to the Public, with all the force of argument which our feeble powers would permit, we have but complied with the dictates of duty. We truſt that we have fallen into no indecency of expreſſion; we are well aſſured, that we have not exceeded the bounds of legality. That there may be danger in this conduct, we are aware. We affect not to magnify, but we are prepared to meet it. We have not forgotten that the Cabinet poſſeſs the unlimited Power of IMPRISONMENT. Aged as we are, and bowed with infirmities, we are ill able to ſuſtain the preſſure of thoſe hardſhips, which a rigorous exerciſe of that power might poſſibly inflict. Perhaps the Cabinet are too candid, or too politic, thus to oppreſs innocent Men. Whether Mr. Pitt be capable of acting with ſo much rancour and malignity, we know not. We hope that he is not. But ſtill the abuſe of unlimited power is poſſible. The Cabinet of Charles the Firſt oppreſſed the virtuous Elliot, whoſe only fault was the honeſt performance of his duty. Guilty of no breach of Law, he periſhed by the worſt of deaths, the ſlow torture of a diſſolution, effected by the hardſhips of a priſon. But

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the fear of poſſible oppreſſion will not juſtify the non-performance of our duty to the Public. We truſt to the PROTECTION OF THE LAW. But if Law ſhould be unable to protect, if the fate of the generous Elliot ſhould await us, may we meet it with his unſhaken fortitude! May the ſmile of APPROVING HEAVEN conſole and cheer us to the laſt!

THE END.

Printed at the Office of
Lucas Lund,
Little Stonegate, York.